

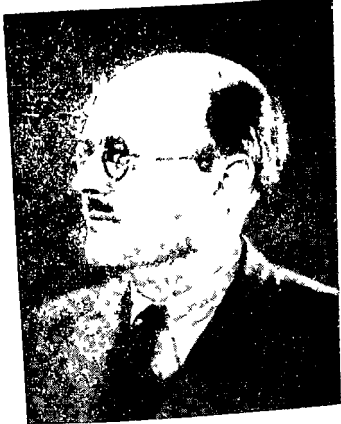
# NEW WAYS OF WAR.

BY TOM WINTRINGHAM

Mr. Wintringham believes that war is not a "difficult mystery" to be left to soldiers. "To-day it is the duty of all citizens of a democracy to understand this business of fighting for a People's War is the only effective answer to Totalitarian War." Soldiers and civilians will find the answers to many of their questions about recent events in France in this book. Here, also, are practical suggestions for each one of us which can give us the knowledge and confidence that if we choose new paths of thought and action we can destroy Fascism for ever.

*Govindlal Shrivastava,  
Mumbai, Bombay*





### THE AUTHOR

says of himself 'I was born in 1898 in a house of solid Victorian brick in a town of solid Victorian prosperity. The prosperity was not elegant, in fact it stank a bit of fish'. Growing up in this provincial town of Grimsby I absorbed from my parents nonconformists in religion liberal in their outlook on life a tradition of non political radicalism.

Though known most widely to the public through his articles in *Picture Post* *Daily Mirror* etc. as a military writer, he is also a poet and short story writer. His books include *Coming World War*, *Mutiny*, *English Captain* and *Deadlock War*. His military opinions are based on practical soldiering with the B.E.F., 1914-18 and with the International Brigades in Spain where he commanded the British Battalion and later became instructor in the officers school.

A PENGUIN SPECIAL

# NEW WAYS OF WAR

BY  
TOM WINTRINGHAM

9140.511

WIN

Govindlal Shirlal,  
Moulal, Bombay



PENGUIN BOOKS

HARMONDSWORTH MIDDLESEX ENGLAND

41 EAST 28TH STREET NEW YORK U.S.A.

First Published

1940

### PUBLISHER'S NOTE

If you are not already on our mailing list and would like to know when new books are added, please send in your name and address on a postcard. Suggestions for new additions are welcomed

## INTRODUCTION

In September, 1939, the Germans overran Poland. In April, 1940, they seized almost the whole of Norway. In May they broke through Belgium and France, reaching the sea. In June they took Paris and defeated France. In each of these campaigns they have shown us new ways of war, which we must learn.

We can learn from these and other campaigns not only the methods of the Germans, but how to counter these methods and improve on them for our own use.

M. Reynaud, then Prime Minister of France, said on May 21st, 1940 :

"The truth is that our classic conception of the conduct of war has come up against a new conception. At the basis of this conception there is not only the massive use of heavy armoured divisions or co-operation between them and aeroplanes, but the creation of disorder in the enemy's rear by means of parachute raids, which in Holland nearly caused the fall of the Hague, and in Belgium seized the strongest fort of Liège.

"I will not speak to you of the false news and the orders given by means of the telephone to the civil authorities with the object, for example, of causing hurried evacuations.

"You will understand that of all the tasks which confront us the most important is clear thinking. We must think of the new type of warfare which we are facing and take immediate decisions."

This book has one aim only—clear thinking. This,

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

as M. Reynaud said—unfortunately, too late—is the first need when faced with new methods of warfare

But how is the reader to feel sure that the new methods are correctly described in these pages, and the right antidotes suggested? In many newspapers and some booklets there are articles that pick out this or that feature of the German attacks as the essential keys to their success. Why should what I write here be believed, rather than the soothing statements of retired generals in some papers and the bright thoughts of journalists without military experience in others? Without wanting to boast, it is necessary for me to give my own credentials in this matter

One thing admitted by all observers of the German attacks is that they use most of their bombers as a flying artillery. Five years ago, in a book called *The Coming World War*, I wrote that

“The aeroplane in the next war will not mainly be a special sort of scout, it will mainly be a special sort of artillery”

Then, fighting in Spain, I experienced this use of flying artillery, and found its chief point of difference from the older forms of artillery. In a pamphlet called “Battle Training in Word and Picture,” published soon after the beginning of the war, with the approval of the War Office, I wrote

“This seemed to us the principal value of the aeroplane against a trained infantry—it is a sort of artillery that can be concentrated *very quickly* to check an enemy break through or to hammer at a centre of resistance when your enemy is retreating”

Those who have listened to the B B C news service during the nine months since Poland was invaded

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

will remember how many times the reports of our Air Ministry have dwelt mainly on reconnaissance flights. Over the Siegfried Line, deep into Germany, over Norway and over the swaying battles of May and June, 1940, many of our aeroplanes have been used as "a special sort of scout". Many others have been used for long-range bombing raids away from the centres of fighting. How many have been used as "a sort of artillery that can be concentrated very quickly," smashing at the enemy troops who are actually doing the fighting on the ground we do not know. All we know is that this use of the bomber is seldom reported. If we judge from the reports, our planes are too seldom the flying artillery that I predicted and that the Germans employ to the full.

The second thing that enters into the German formula of warfare, all observers agree, is the use of heavy tanks, so powerfully armoured that they are not vulnerable to light anti-tank weapons. In the *Daily Herald* for September 7th, 1939, I described the lighter German tanks that had not done well in Spain, and went on to describe some of the bigger machines that have clawed their way through our lines:

"Perhaps because of experience gained in Spain a new tank of about twenty-five tons\* has been developed in Germany mounting a field-gun of about three inches and a smaller gun of 37 mm besides machine-guns."

These are the machines that the French anti-tank guns failed to stop.

In a book called *Deadlock War*, published in

\* I know now that the German heavy medium tank of about 25 tons has been reinforced by a small number of very heavy models, probably 70 to 80 tons.

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

March, 1940, I wrote that : " there seems good reason therefore for developing a relatively large size of anti-tank gun." In this book I praised the German 88 mm. gun, which is used for anti-aircraft work, anti-tank work, and as field artillery. This gun is slightly larger than the French 75 field-gun, which, according to French official reports, was found the best substitute for dealing with tanks, when the little anti-tank gun was found to be too light.

My " credentials " on this point are my putting in print, before there was any fighting in France, the need for a bigger and better anti-tank gun.

The third main factor in the success of the German tactics and strategy is that they have employed and developed the tactics known as " deep infiltration." This means that their army does not attack strung out in a line, and maintaining contact all the time between its advanced units and its main forces. It does not hit like a fist, but like long probing fingers with armoured finger-nails. Each separate claw seeks a weak spot ; if it can drive through this weak spot, it does not worry about its flanks, or about continuous communications with the forces following it. It relies for safety upon surprise, upon the disorganisation of its opponents due to the fact that it has broken through to the rear of their position.

Since the war in Spain, where I found that both sides had to adopt this tactic when trying to advance—using, if they had no armoured divisions, their strongest units to form the " probing fingers "—I have been advocating this tactic of infiltration. It is not part of the doctrine of the French or British armies. But, as I have continually pointed out, it is part of the doctrine of the German army, part



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

of the "secret" of their successes, we have to learn.

One final point, not so much as to the methods that the Germans employ as to the methods by which we can resist them. From Spain I drew the conclusion that in defence as well as in attack the initiative of the subordinate commander and of the ordinary soldier is the most vital quality to be cultivated.

I pointed out, in print, before this war, that under attack from the air regular systems of command break down: "the officer can no longer content himself with giving definite orders and seeing that they are carried out. Every man under him must be given the indispensable minimum of 'general idea,' so that each man can act on his own initiative if need be, for a period, when isolated from command" (*How to Reform the Army*).

And I demanded, as the key-note in the training and organisation of troops, "intelligence, independence, initiative."

The need for just the qualities I demanded has been strikingly confirmed by the analysis of the French defeats of May, 1940, made by the military correspondent of *The Times*, who wrote on May 21st, 1940:

"There is also some reason to believe that the French Army is shaking off the effects of the extremely rigid tactics which are the fruit of an ultra-cautious doctrine, and undoubtedly hampered them during the first two or three days of the German offensive on the Meuse. If the initiative which has been most unfortunately withheld from subordinates should be restored, the French officer will soon show that he has not lost the inheritance of improvisation and quick

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

action in emergency which come to him from a great line of military ancestors "

Let me repeat that these quotations are not given in the spirit of " I told you so " They are not claims that I foresaw what would happen in this war actually I was so sure of the possibility of defence against tanks and aeroplanes that I thought this war would be a deadlock The claim I make is that I put down in writing before this war began, or during the early months of it, many of the essential things that have given the Germans success in Northern France These things, therefore were not a surprise to me, I have not had to find explanations for them based on a hasty analysis And my second claim is that I have for some time been recommending methods by which armies can fight and cities can live in spite of the bombers, I have been recommending methods by which tanks were in fact stopped in Spain and can be stopped in France, or in Britain This book is not simply an attempt to describe more accurately than others have described the new ways of war, it is an attempt to get, before we are too late, the new methods adopted that I feel certain can be victorious in defence

Britain and the people who live in Britain can be made safe But the changes necessary to give us that safety are enormous I state my view of these changes in the chapters that follow, on our army, our auxiliary fighting forces and our policies On the Navy and Air Force I write nothing here I was in the old Flying Corps, the R F C, before there was an Air Force But that was a long time ago and I do not know naval problems and air problems well enough to guess at the answers

But modern war on land I do feel able to claim

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

that I know something about; in fact I believe that there is no officer in the British Army who has had, within the past ten years, a year or more of hard campaigning against modern arms and modern tactics, against tanks and planes. Those who served with me in the International Brigade in Spain had this experience, which I have tried to summarise.

Parts of some of the chapters that follow embody pages from my book, *Deadlock War*, published by Faber and Faber, from a pamphlet now out of print, published in the "Fact" series, and from articles published in *Picture Post* and the *Daily Mirror*. I have to thank the editors or publishers of these for their permission to reprint these passages.

London, July, 1940.

T. WINTRINGHAM



## CHAPTER I

At the moment when these pages are written Britain is in danger of invasion by an opponent using new methods of war. In order to understand these new methods, and find a way of countering them, we must first analyse what they are, and how they have developed.

It is possible for anyone to judge how war is developing, changing, the main lines of its present "progress." A civilian can do this by the same methods, using the same common-sense attitude to facts and theories, that he uses to understand the main lines of progress or alteration in trade or transport or production. It is not difficult for any man to see that there was a period when almost all transport was by road or sea; then a period when canal transport became an important factor in the world's way of shifting heavy goods about; a later period when railways were the main means of doing this, and a period now developing in which road transport, powered by petrol and diesel engines, displaces to some extent the previous methods. These changes are not complete: railways do not destroy the canals, nor are all railways entirely bankrupted later by lorry traffic. But all the same these changes exist. And similar changes take place in war, and are just as easy to see.

Sometimes these changes are exactly parallel to those going on in transport and industry. Thus there was a period when the supplies of armies, and the armies

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

themselves, travelled by road or river. Then came a period of "railway war." To-day we have "petrol war," a period which most of an army's supplies and men have to be moved by petrol or diesel vehicles.

To fail to recognise such changes can be fatal. Some French generals judged in May, 1940, that the Germans could not make their main blow through the Ardennes, because there are few railways in that area. In fact the main German blow did fall there. The French were surprised, and their main line at Sedan and along the Meuse was broken—partly because they had not realised that "petrol war" had replaced "railway war."

War is not a very certain business. It is not, perhaps, subject to the same natural uncertainties as agriculture, though it is almost as dependent on the fickleness of weather. Yet there are no magical mysteries of war, any more than there are in agriculture. The ordinary man, finding that some uncertainties are bound to exist, allows for them, and gets beyond them to the things that are fairly certain. The farmer harvests when he can, in spite of the weather's uncertainty, and does not say: "We can reach no decision, since it may be raining to-morrow."

We see tendencies in war, and separate them out. How do these affect each other? It is hard to say. It is as if we were given figures, say 2 and 3, but do not know if they should be added to make 5 or multiplied together to make 6. (It seems just possible sometimes we should put them one on top of each other and get two thirds as the answer to our sum.) But we are on quite safe ground if we say that however these figures are treated they do not equal a sardine tin.

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

Within the experience of many men now living is a Great War, some knowledge of other smaller wars, such as that in Spain, and knowledge of the present struggle. These show certain tendencies. One, clear and obvious to everybody, is that wars nowadays often mean trenches. In Julius Cæsar's day or Napoleon's, or the elder Moltke's, soldiers were fairly rarely in trenches. Now they are rarely out of them. That is clear enough. We can take many equally obvious tendencies in warfare that appear between 1914 and the present day, and reckon that our main uncertainty is whether these tendencies will grow and increase, fade out, add to each other, or partially cancel each other. But we can see also that however these tendencies are multiplied or subtracted, they cannot produce a sort of war in which it is possible to carry out a "Charge of the Light Brigade"—a gallop by men on horses, armed with swords, to attack an enemy position.

Yet this manifest impossibility is still part of the "doctrine" of the British Army.

As we shall show in more detail later, the "Charge of the Light Brigade" idea, and the group of ideas that fit with it, still to a large extent dominate the training and the tactics of the British Army, even of sections of it that are equipped with armoured vehicles. This idea is not a small relatively harmless vestige of past ideas and forms embedded in new ways of thought and action. It governs, to a large extent, drill, discipline, the aims and methods of commanders, and the attitude of the men commanded.

This is an example of the survival from times long past, of ideas and methods of warfare that have been completely swept away by the development of modern

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

weapons and tactics. Clearly one of the first things to do, if we are to attempt to understand and answer the Nazi methods of war, is to strip away this lumber of old-fashioned ideas and scrap the text-books that embody them.

But this is only a small part of our job; we have also to get to the roots of the changes that happen in warfare, and see how these changes arise.

The shape of war has changed, throughout history, principally in accordance with changes in civilian methods of production and transportation. Weapons and armour developed with the slow discovery of methods of working metals. The arts of building and drainage are the basis for the arts of fortification. Chemistry, giving propellants and explosives, and engineering, giving the aeroplane and the motor vehicle, affect the actual conduct of battles to-day more than the "systems" of warfare evolved from experience and study of war as such. Faraday, the scientist, "inventing electricity," and Clausewitz, the military theorist, analysing war, were working at about the same time; Faraday's work—in its present form as the magneto and the wireless valve—has altered warfare more than the labours of Clausewitz, war's greatest scientist.

Within recent times one of the things that have altered war most is the general change throughout the world's industry from single-acting, -simple machinery, that carries out only one operation and then must be reset, to automatic machinery that repeats what it is doing as often as the man minding it desires. The rifle, that fires a shot and then has to be reloaded by hand to fire the next one, belongs to the old days; the machine-gun, that can go on firing so long as the

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

man handling it presses the trigger, belongs to the present, the century of automatic machinery.

This type of machinery, organised in new ways for mass-production, can produce almost unlimited amounts of material of all sorts. The twentieth century, therefore, can equip armies of millions, far larger than the forces ever before brought to battle, and give these millions much greater supplies of ammunition per man.

Mass production factories can also often use women as their labour power in war-time. All modern production needs far less labour per article produced than was needed by older methods. A very large proportion of the man power of whole nations is therefore released, made available for the armies.

Changes in production and in the organisation of civil life in these ways not only made possible, but made inescapable some of the aspects of the last world war and of the present one - forces consisting of "nations in arms," able to sling daily at their antagonists thousands of tons of lead, steel and explosives, and supplied by crowded railways, crowded roads, with the products of a great part of each nation's industries.

And these aspects in turn make possible another aspect - a trench deadlock, position warfare. This, I know, is not the form of war we are all interested in now, but we have to deal with it because it precedes and influences the development of the German tactics of to-day.

Three months after the Great War had begun there was a continuous line of entrenchments along all the front from Switzerland to the sea. This line, though breached at many points during four years of war, was always re-established a few days or weeks after



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

a breach was made in it, until the final battles of the war

Six months after the war began in Spain a line of entrenchments existed from the Pyrenees to a point near Gibraltar. This line was more than twice as long as the Western Front of 1914-18. It was not continuous, but the gaps in it were filled by fortified farms and villages, and other "strong points". In two years of warfare from the time when this line was established, it was often breached, but was usually re-established a few days or weeks after a breach was made in it.

The line in Spain was established and held by forces not a quarter of the strength of those on the Western Front twenty years before. The forces in Spain at the time when the trench lines were forming were not much larger than the forces that Napoleon placed in the Spanish peninsula a hundred years earlier. Napoleon's armies had little to do with trenches. Why did the armies of 1936-39 dig them? Why did the main forces of the British, French and German armies hide themselves, during 1939 and much of 1940, in vast entrenchments?

This business of hiding armies behind earthworks or in prepared ditches has been done before in history, when the armies were concentrated for the siege or defence of cities. Small areas, as well as cities have been defended by trench lines, such as Wellington's lines of Torres Vedras or the Russian lines outside Port Arthur. But these were exceptions. In the past war has usually consisted of a relatively small amount of sieges, and a lot of moving and fighting on the surface of the ground unencumbered by entrenchments.

The great numbers employed in a modern war make

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

Western Front, position warfare became more and more rigid, immovable, and futile. To "attack" meant to lose twice or three times as many men as your opponent, with no considerable gain in ground, and no decisive effect on anything except your own cannon fodder. The armies were locked in solid and continuous lines of trenches, in which they were pounded and obliterated by an even heavier hail of shells.

From March, 1917, to March, 1918, position warfare was in full flower, but some of the factors that must lead to its partial decay, its change into a new shape, became apparent. One factor was the tank, another, more important, was a new method of defence, —which inevitably developed into its opposite, a new tactical method for infantry advance. The defensive method was known as "elastic defence" or "defence in depth", the second developed from it, and adopted because it was a success, was called the tactic of "infiltration in attack."

Ludendorff, *My War Memories*, 1914-18, describes the development of the first of these, the defensive tactic, during the winter of 1916

"In sharp contrast to the form of defence hitherto employed, which had been restricted to rigid and easily recognised lines of little depth, a new system was devised which, by distribution in depth and the adoption of a loose formation, enabled a more active defence to be maintained. It was, of course, intended that the position should remain in our hands at the end of the battle, but the infantryman need no longer say to himself, 'Here I must stand or fall,' but had, on the contrary, the right

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

within certain limits, to retire in any direction before strong enemy fire. Any part of the line that was lost was to be recovered by counter-attack. The group, on the importance of which many intelligent officers had insisted before the war, now became officially the tactical unit of the infantry. The position of the N C O. as group leader thus became much more important. Tactics became more and more individualised. Having regard to the ever more scanty training of our officers, N C O.'s and men, and the consequent falling-off in discipline, it was a risky business, of the success of which many eminent soldiers were sceptical, to make ever greater demands on the subordinate leaders, and the individual soldier.

"The controversy raged furiously in my staff; I myself had to intervene to advocate the new tactics."

To the civilian reader it may be pointed out that this paragraph by Ludendorff first describes a new method of defence "deep" from front to back, scattered rather than all laid out in lines, it then describes, as its logical counterpart, a new and "revolutionary" organisation of the army intended to make this defence possible. "The group . . . became the tactical unit." This means that the unit which received separate orders, acted "on its own," did different things at different times from the units alongside it, was now the smallest possible one, a "group" of ten or a dozen men led by a corporal or sergeant.

The importance of this will be seen when it is compared with the past. In the days of Frederick the Great tactics had stiffened so much that the usual

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

tactical unit in battle was the whole infantry of an army. Frederick alone had to think and decide, everyone else just obeyed. All the foot soldiers advanced at the same time, in one straight or slanting line, and they tried to keep in rank, even in step, from one flank of the army to the other. In Napoleonic days the tactical unit was the corps, division, or brigade, more rarely the battalion. At Waterloo the whole corps of the Young Guard or the Old Guard moved into action together, doing the same thing at the same time. When Wellington counter-attacked, he moved forward the whole of Vivian's brigade of cavalry and Adam's brigade of infantry, and these bodies moved in close formation as units. The minor formations of which they were made—squadrons of cavalry and battalions of infantry—did not co-operate "in their own time," but acted as if the brigades were single things commanded by one voice.

In the war of 1870 the development of fire power made mass formations, shoulder to shoulder, no longer useful. But the tactical unit in action was still the brigade or battalion, rarely the company.

In the relatively open warfare of August–October, 1914, the tactical unit was usually the same as in 1870. It was sometimes larger during the two following years, when generals were beginning to hear about trenches and barbed wire and machine guns but had not yet begun to believe that these things mattered. Whole divisions of British infantry climbed out of the trenches to commit suicide "dressed by the right." The official British history says, for example, of the 34th Division at the Somme:

"At zero hour the whole infantry of the division,

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

except the head of the second column, rose as one man . . . In a matter of ten minutes 80 per cent. of the men in the leading battalions were casualties" (*Military Operations, France and Belgium*, Vol V, Brigadier-General Sir J E Edmonds, 1932, page 379).

But there were also operations planned with more realism, and carried out with more independence. In these the tactical unit became the company, and finally, as Ludendorff says, the group

Statistically, it looks like this: figures are for the usual tactical unit in battle, and not for small outpost actions or exceptional battle conditions

Year	Tactical Unit	Men in Unit	No of Men in a whole army responsible for tactical decisions
1757 - -	Army -	15,000-50 000	1
1815 - -	Brigade or Division -	2 000-6 000	20-30
1870 - -	Battalion or Brigade -	800-3 000	100-200
1914-16 -	Company-Division -	200-15,000	200-10,000
1917 (German)	Group -	8-16	100,000-200,000

Ludendorff's phrase, "tactics became more and more individualised," did not at first mean that the individual soldier had to take many decisions on his own initiative, the "individualisation" was of command Corporals and sergeants had, more and more, to take decisions without the possibility of reporting to, or

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

getting orders from, their officers. Then, later, the typical German defensive line in battle became a thickly-dotted scatter of machine-gun "pill-boxes" and of machine-gunners and riflemen in shell-holes. In daylight there could often be no communication between these "nests" and the larger groups of men in "strong points," trenches and deep dugouts behind them. A machine gun needs only one or two men to work it, a shell-hole seldom gives cover for more than two or three men. The "tactical unit," the group of ten or twelve, was now sub-divided into three or four smaller groups in shell-holes or pill boxes. Tactics became completely "individualised."

Ask any British infantryman who went through Passchendaele. were not those "Jerries" in twos and threes the people who held us up?

The change in position warfare that took place with this development can be described as a change from a continuous "brick wall" of entrenchments to a looser network like that of barbed wire. This network would "give" if necessary, and however hard you pushed at it, it was almost impossible to make a real hole in it.

Then in 1918 the Germans turned to the attack. Their troops had received a year's training in "individualised" tactics. They applied these to the attack, developed and practised the theory called "infiltration," and with this new method destroyed the British Fifth Army (March, 1918), and put their opponents in such danger that only by the skin of their teeth did the latter avoid the loss of the Channel Ports or of Paris.

Their method can be described by a metaphor: the defence to be penetrated is, necessarily, a criss cross

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

of strong positions and weak ones. Any line of trenches, after bombardment, is weaker at the points where shells have blown it up, there are also inevitably natural weaknesses such as "dead ground" (i.e. ground that cannot be seen) near to it, and covered ways of approach, ditches or lines of shell holes, along which the enemy can penetrate. In our metaphor this criss-cross is represented by an iron grating such as that which covers sewer holes in streets—the bars are the strong bits, the spaces between them the weak ones.

Such a grating is almost indestructible by the heaviest of hammers. Nor can you force even a box full of matches through it—a company of men, held together. But take your matches out, set them flaming, and throw them in twos and threes at the grating, some will get through beyond it. A defence line is like a badly ventilated sewer—if fire gets down into it, it blows up.

Infiltration implies that groups and little packets of infantry (later, of armoured troops) wriggle their way through and beyond the strong positions of the enemy, whether these positions are continuous trenches or not. They neglect these strong positions, and sheer off from those of the second and third lines, using mist, darkness or smoke to get by. They go for the enemy's artillery, his cookhouses, his ammunition dumps, his airfields, and his command centres. Other groups try to seize ridges behind his lines, defiles, river-crossings etc. Other groups work through the same gaps, behind them, and try to widen these gaps by attacking the enemy's strong positions from the rear or flank. Other groups are always piling it behind.

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

At first the infantry groups "filtering" forward, to get through a "fine-meshed" defence, have to be tiny. Then as gaps are torn in the meshes, whole companies can march or crawl or run through the holes created. Then the gaps are widened, and battalions push through, but these battalions have to be ready to "come to pieces," to parcel themselves out into little independent groups as soon as they hit against a formed line of defence through which they, in turn, must filter.

In such a battle the corporals and sergeants leading little groups forward have to display even more initiative and independence than in elastic defence. They must understand the task they have been given, and use their own wits to find their own way to do it.

By the tactics of infiltration the trench deadlock was broken in 1918, and "position warfare" became something else again. It was no longer siege warfare, but war of movement under new conditions, and with a new shape. And here we see how the *Blitzkrieg* develops directly from its opposite, the stalemate of the trenches.

The same process went on in Spain twenty years later. The continuous and rigid trench lines, manned by all available troops, were replaced by a deep network of posts and strong points. Advance in waves was replaced by deep infiltration. At the battle of the Ebro in July, 1938, when Republican forces filtered twenty to thirty miles forward after crossing the river, sections of thirty men were given "operation orders," general directions for movement and an outline of tasks, for two days' fighting. These sections were expected to be "on their own" for that period;



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

the sergeant leading them was, for that time, his own colonel and his own general

Such changes have happened before in warfare, and usually in the same direction the increasing power of weapons, their ability to kill at distance, has continually enforced on armies tactics that are more flexible, more open and entail more separation between units or individuals, and a more complex co-operation between them. This general process (against which there have been periods of reaction) parallels the progressive division of labour and growing complexity of function observable throughout civilisation. But it derives much more directly from the improvement of industry and its effect on weapons. There has been no stagnation of science and technique since 1918, industry can produce more and better weapons, able to kill more effectively at greater distances. The present war, therefore, not only includes this "mincing" of armies, but carries it to greater lengths.

It is, after all, exactly the same process as that noted by Napoleon, who wrote

"The nature of arms decides the composition of armies their plans of campaign, their marches, positions, and encampments, their order of battle, and the design of their fortifications, this sets in constant opposition the military system of the ancients and that of modern times. The arms of the ancient world made necessary depth of rank, the ancient arms demand extended order (*l'ordre mince*), the former called for upstanding strong points with high towers and walls, the latter make necessary low forts covered with slopes of earth

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

that mask the masonry" (*Precis of the Wars of Julius Cæsar*, by Napoleon Bonaparte)

To refuse to adopt the tactics of infiltration and of elastic defence is as out of date as to build walled castles, or to put your air-raid shelters above the surface of the ground

The first essential thing about the Nazi *blitzkrieg* tactics is that they are tactics of infiltration, carried to much greater lengths than ever before, and speeded up by the use of the two new technical weapons of importance, the tank and the aeroplane

The word "infiltration" does not occur in the published documents of the British War Office that govern the training of troops and the policy of commanders, it does not occur in *Infantry Training or Field Service Regulations*

And some dislike of the word "infiltration" is noticeable in some parts of the British Army This may in part be due to reasons similar to those which led the French Army authorities, in 1918, to ban the word When the Germans were boasting of their new tactic (and had by means of this tactic strained the French and British armies almost to the point where these armies must split off from each other), French war correspondents were strictly forbidden to write of infiltration Jean de Pierrefeu, then an officer at French headquarters, wrote

"This terrible word, which expressed the latest moves of the enemy and his method of fighting, was feared on account of the striking light it would throw upon our present inferiority in the country and the army Not only has the word a suggestion

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

of cunning, it expresses a treacherous action impossible to avert, of a kind to cause alarms" (*French Headquarters, 1915-18, by Jean de Pierrefeu*).

But after the experience of the B.E.F. in France during May and June, 1940, it is widely recognised within the British Army that the German tactics are those of infiltration, such as I have described, and that from these tactics we have much to learn.

A full acceptance of these tactics as an essential part of modern war makes a great difference to all forms of training and equipment. To take one simple example that continually recurs in warfare: the business of an advance guard. Advance guards used to be considered in the British Army mainly as protective organisations. Their job was to go ahead of larger bodies of troops and to see that these larger bodies were not surprised by some enemy action. They had a secondary purpose, which was to clear out of the way small forces of the enemy which might delay the progress of the main body, and to force larger forces to disclose their positions.

Now all this is changed. If you accept the tactics of infiltration, the advance guard of any force moving forward has duties that are in essence very different from these. The business of an advance guard is no longer mainly protection, exploration and the rapid removal of small obstacles. To-day the business of an advanced guard is to probe for weak spots in the enemy's line and to get behind that line.

Naturally, in order to fulfil this very different role, the advance guard of an army practicing the tactics of infiltration will consist of different troops, differently armed and differently trained, as compared with

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

an advance guard carrying out the tactics of the past

The Germans have planned the whole of their army and its equipment round these tactics. To give an example, they have given pieces of artillery to their infantry, so that any unit of infantry, of battalion size or larger, that is filtering forward, has with it a certain amount of artillery fire power as well as the more normal infantry weapons. We have not got this specialised equipment, we have got, for example, no "infantry gun" such as the Germans use, which is handy enough for the infantry to take it with them, man handling it forward when it cannot be dragged by or carried on a lorry. This puts us at a disadvantage, but the disadvantage is not a great one. The tactics of infiltration are far more a question of training, understanding, morale, organisation and leadership than they are a question of special equipment and such special weapons as tanks and dive bombers. Once we have learnt the general idea of these tactics and fitted ourselves to carry them out, we shall be able to make do with any equipment that can be made sufficiently mobile.

There is one form of weapon that fits very badly to the tactics of infiltration. That is the heavy gun and heavy howitzer which needs a special emplacement, can only be moved slowly, and makes a good target for tank raids, for dive bombing, or for infantry units filtering forward. Heavy artillery of this sort was needed in great quantities during the trench warfare of 1915-18. It may be needed again if we again have a stabilised front at some future period or in certain areas. But it is not a suitable weapon for the *blitzkrieg*.

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

There are other weapons which fit particularly well with infiltration, and need the utmost development. One of these is the lightest form of machine rifle or sub-machine-gun. In relatively slow-moving warfare the heavy machine-gun tends to dominate the battlefield; its accuracy, its immense fire power, its ability to go on firing for long periods make it the ideal weapon for battles such as the Somme or Vimy Ridge. But for infiltration something much lighter, much less expensive in ammunition, and much more a weapon of opportunity is desirable for the advance units of the infantry, including those put behind the enemy's lines by armoured vehicles or from the air.

From all this certain conclusions: if we are to meet the new Nazi tactics, we must do the following:

1. Understand the tactics of infiltration and train our troops in them, and in methods of meeting them.
2. Realise the connection between these tactics and the trench deadlock; for defensive purposes realise that these tactics make linear defence and passive defence no longer valuable, and make counter-attack the only basis for successful defence.
3. Clear out of our army the remnants of the past—ideas, methods of training and organisation and the men who cannot change—and revive in the army the qualities necessary for carrying out and meeting infiltration: qualities of initiative, independence, the spirit of attack and counter-attack.

Clearing up the past is an essential preliminary; therefore the next chapter is given to it.

## CHAPTER II

IN the previous chapter I asserted that the "Charge of the Light Brigade" was still part of the official doctrine of the British Army. Here is the evidence for this assertion, taken from official manuals which are in most cases the only ones available for officers and troops in training.

"A characteristic (of cavalry) conferred by the sword, is the power to press home an attack mounted"—*Cavalry Training (War)*, 1929, page 135

"The armament of the individual cavalryman is the rifle for use dismounted and the sword for mounted attack . . . Mounted rifles . . . carry no sword, and are thus not equipped for shock tactics"—*Field Service Regulation*, Vol II, 1935, page 6

"The use of the sword in war in the charge against both cavalry and infantry each man will ride at his opponent with the fixed determination of running him through and killing him"—*Cavalry Training (Horsed)*, 1937, page 30

"In modern war, opportunities for shock action, though they have become less common owing to the power of fire, will still present themselves. The leaders of squadrons, troops and sections should be constantly on the look-out for such opportunities"—*Cavalry Training (Horsed)*, page 117

"Shock action" or shock tactics is the technical phrase for riding into or over men, hitting them with swords and bayonets, and similar Stone Age follies

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

The manual from which the last two remarkable quotations are taken is dated 31st July, 1937—more than a year after the opening of the Spanish War. No less than twenty three pages of the text are devoted to sword and lance\* exercises, and these are illustrated by twenty two drawings ("plates," as they are called in accordance with Victorian tradition). A further twelve "plates" are devoted to drill, only three are given to the formations necessary in action, and one—one!—to the use of fire.

Cavalry, the sceptical reader will answer, is a small fraction of the Army, unimportant, a plaything. That is true. But the point is that the War Office believes that the Charge of the Light Brigade is still possible, and this belief colours its training and handling of all other troops. Take, for example, armoured cars. The 1st handbook I know begins—

"1. The principles and system of training will be as laid down in *Cavalry Training (Horsed)*, with certain modifications. . . . laid down in this chapter" (page 1). (The chapter contains no mention of swords or lances.)

"Mounted drill . . ." (by this is meant drill in armoured cars) "is based on the same principles as that of cavalry" (page 4).

"The principles of training in field operations given in *Cavalry Training (Horsed)* are, in general, applicable to armoured car regiments" (page 12).

The above three quotations are from *Cavalry Training (Mechanised) Pamphlet No. 1, 1937*.

It is not stated whether armoured cars should be given lumps of sugar after a good gallop. In this,

\* The lance as a weapon was discarded twelve years ago. These are exercises in its ceremonial use.

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

as in all else, we must presumably follow the authoritative doctrine that armoured cars are cavalry

One further quotation is necessary from the same manual: "It is of the greatest importance that all leaders should be trained:

1. To act quickly and make rapid decisions; with this object officers will be encouraged to hunt and ride across country"—*Cavalry Training (Mechanised)* 1937, page 13)

So long as the leadership of the British Army consists mainly of men who find the highest expression of their energies and interests in fox hunting, it will remain the theory of the army that fox hunting is the method by which mental alertness can be induced. It will seem abnormal to such leaders that a racing motor-cyclist from the dirt tracks should be given command of a squadron of armoured cars, it will seem normal that a man who plays polo should be given such command. But in fact, as any sensible person can see, a dirt track rider is much more likely to be a good leader of a mechanised advance guard than a polo player.

The doctrine of infiltration implies that the leaders of a modern army must allow subordinate commanders to use their own judgment. Each of the units of a mechanised striking force must be "given its head". But owing to the social structure of Britain in the past, and of the class that rules the army, it is difficult in the British Army for the higher commanders to trust and encourage their juniors in this way. The leadership that hunts foxes cannot believe that the young officers from civil life (so charmingly labelled "temporary gentleman" in the last war) can possibly



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

think for themselves and act for themselves without close and continuous control from above. As for sergeants, corporals, and ordinary men of the ranks, they are unfortunately debarred by birth and income from polo and fox hunting; how can they possibly be given the right and the duty to act on their own? In this way class considerations have in the past made it difficult for our army to achieve the form of leadership necessary for modern war.

In other words the root of the reluctance of the British Army to adopt modern methods of war lies in its snobbery. And this does not only apply to the love of horse-flesh (as compared with the skilled mechanic's love for his machine) it also applies for example to our Territorial Army, whose officers have been chosen or have chosen themselves on a social basis. The son of the bank manager or of a successful speculative builder finds it pleasant and useful to be a Territorial officer in time of peace; he gains thereby business contacts and the sort of prestige that will get him elected to the more select golf club in his town. Persons becoming officers for these reasons do not necessarily possess any quality of military leadership whatever; and for this reason leaders of the army who like to tie everything up in red-tape, and refuse to adopt tactics that allow subordinate commanders to use initiative, often have the perfectly good argument that the subordinate commanders appointed to serve under them are in fact unable to use initiative. Our answer to their argument is simply that other subordinate commanders must be found, not chosen on the basis of snobbery and the old school tie but on their capacity for active responsibility.

Sections of society left behind by the changes of

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

social life develop myths. The two myths that we have been examining so far may be described as the myth of the man on horseback and the myth of the gentleman as the natural leader. All such myths once had a basis in fact. The man on horseback ruled warfare in Europe for a thousand years, from the break up of the Roman Empire to the Battle of Crécy. The Welsh and English long bowmen, at Crécy, defeated the armoured knights who had hitherto been invincible, from that time cavalry took a secondary place, and gradually a dwindling place, in warfare. The last real cavalry charge in the history of war was the charge of the 21st Lancers at the Battle of Omdurman, at the end of the last century. This charge has been described by Mr Winston Churchill, who took part in it as a subaltern. It is clear from Mr Churchill's description that it could not possibly have succeeded against an enemy with modern arms.

But this myth that was truth in the Middle Ages, and was fading from reality in Queen Victoria's day, still haunts the minds and imaginations of the British Army's leaders to such an extent that sections of our Tank Corps are called "cavalry tanks". Until this myth has been destroyed, our army can never be a modern instrument.

The second myth that we have mentioned, the gentleman as the natural leader of the people, had also a great deal of truth in it at one period, and this period is less far back than that of cavalry.

There was a time in the past when the gentry of England mainly lived on their estates. They were a squirearchy. And in each village the squire and his sons and those few others who were accepted as

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

gentry, had a natural and customary relationship with labourers and poachers, the village craftsman and the cottage families. It was a direct relationship; the squire and the hedging man talked the same language, used the same oaths, and seldom allowed the farm bailiff or tenant farmer or agent to shut each off from the other. When men of these sorts formed the bulk of the British Army there was also a natural and inborn relationship between the officer and the private. It was not a relationship that we need praise or condemn; it is past and dead. But it did exist; in a few county battalions you can find it existing still, though in a tepid and half-alive state. To-day the gentry of England, or that section which produces the officer class, seldom lives on its estates. It works in offices. Three-quarters of this officer class meet no free craftsmen and no skilled land workers through all their lives, except at odd week-ends. In their offices, at work, they talk to secretaries and trade-union leaders. In their homes they talk to servants and gardeners. They tell you what the proletariat thinks by quoting their charwoman. They have never, in civil life, learnt how to get the best out of men whose hands know things, whose skill is real but inarticulate. Almost universally you will find these members of the officer class consider that garage mechanics—the only skilled men they know—are infernally surly. They deal with "their" workers through foremen, or through trade-union secretaries. When these gentry become officers they try to deal with their men only through sergeants, which is fatal. They have neither the patriarchal, almost feudal, attitude towards their men that marked good officers of a past day, nor the identification with their men that

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

marks the officers of an army hastily built by a people, such as the army of the French Revolution

There still remain a certain number of people who play polo and hunt foxes, and of other gentlemen from the public schools, who make very good officers indeed. They have as a natural gift, or they have acquired, the qualities necessary for leadership in war. I do not suggest that these men should no longer be officers. We need leadership wherever we can find it. But I do suggest that their most valuable contribution to the defence of their country at the present moment will be for them and their class to give up the monopoly of military leadership which they have held in the past. If they can achieve that effort of will and understanding which brings into the leadership of the army the right men from the working class, and from the sections of society that lie between the working class and those educated at public schools, they will at the same time be helping to make an army that is capable of carrying out the defence of this country on modern lines.

There is a third myth, not yet mentioned, that we must deal with *faithfully* before we turn to the positive side, the organisation and the morale necessary for victory. This third myth bulks large in the life of almost every British soldier. It is the myth of the bayonet. Like the other myths mentioned, this had full justification in the past. In the battles of Marlborough and Frederick the Great the bayonet was often the decisive weapon. The musket was such an inefficient firearm that it could only prepare the way for an assault, after an exchange of volleys, a "fire-fight," came the charge with fixed bayonets which pierced or rolled up the enemy's line.

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

But in the War of American Independence men trained in these methods came up against more accurate musketry. One of the British generals who lost America, Lieutenant-General John Burgoyne, wrote in his "Orderly Book" :

" The Officers will take all proper Opportunities, and especially at the beginning of the Campaign, to inculcate in the men's minds a Reliance upon the Bayonet. Men of half their bodily strength, and even Cowards, may be their match in firing, but the onset of Bayonets in the hands of the Valiant is irresistible. The Enemy, convinced of this truth, place their whole dependence in Entrenchments and Rifle pieces. It will be our Glory and preservation to storm where possible."

Unfortunately for " Gentleman Johnny " Burgoyne, as he was known to his opponents, entrenchments and rifles proved more effective in America than bayonets. By the time of the American Civil War, nearly a century later, muskets and rifles and artillery had become so much more effective that General John B. Gordon, of the Confederate Army, wrote in his *Reminiscences of the Civil War* :

" I may say that very few bayonets of any kind were actually used in battle, so far as my observation extended. The one line or the other usually gave way under the galling fire of small arms, grape, and canister, before the bayonet could be brought into requisition. The bristling points and the glitter of the bayonets were fearful to look upon as they were levelled in front of a charging line ; but they were rarely reddened with blood. The day of the bayonet is passed except for use in

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

*hollow squares, or in resisting cavalry charges, or as an implement in constructing light and temporary fortifications. It may still serve a purpose in such emergencies or to impress the soldier's imagination, as the loud-sounding and ludicrous gongs are supposed to stiffen the backs and steady the nerves of the grotesque soldiers of China."*

By 1904, the date of the Russo-Japanese War, it was possible to put down in actual figures the ineffectiveness of the bayonet. A Captain F. Culmann, in his *Etude sur les Caracteres Généraux de la Guerre d'Extrême Orient*, stated that the losses of the Russians from bayonets, swords and spears were only 1·7 per cent. of their casualties; 98·3 per cent. were caused by projectiles of all sorts. The Japanese, who were attacking, and who had to face a heavier cavalry than they possessed, lost 3 per cent. by "*armes blanches*," and 97 per cent. by projectiles. In other words, the bayonet was by that time only able to wound or kill one man as compared with thirty or fifty wounded by rifles, machine-guns and artillery.

Yet when I was taught warfare, in 1914, I was told that attack consisted still of a fire-fight and then an assault with fixed bayonets. In other words, I was taught the same infantry tactics as were employed at Blenheim or Fontenoy, and were becoming a little out of date soon after Waterloo. And all too many English troops, from 1914 up to the present day, have been taught exactly the same thing. They have not been taught, as the Germans have, that "attack is fire that advances, defence is fire that counter-attacks." The average British soldier has been led to expect that after using his weapons for a time he

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

will "get to grips" with his opponents. Our Field Service Regulations have defined infantry as a "force that closes with the enemy." And naturally when they are unable to close with the enemy, our infantry feel lost and disappointed.

After the Norwegian campaign, and still more after the fighting that ended at Dunkirk, our newspapers reported continually the disappointment of our troops that they had not been able to "get at" the Germans. They never had a chance to get to close quarters. They were longing for hand-to-hand fighting, but they were driven out of Norway and Belgium and France without ever meeting their opponents hand to hand. And this complaint is typical not of our less well-trained fighting units but of those who have received the longest and best training available in the British Army.

The cult of the bayonet is still in force. Walk down Whitehall any morning and you will see sentries with fixed bayonets. Most of these sentries have been placed in Whitehall recently, since the authorities woke up to the fact that parachute troops can be dropped by the enemy near centres of command and organisation. The main purpose of these sentries can therefore be presumed to be to protect the War Office, and other institutions supposed to be of value in war, from attack by German parachutists. It is well known that these parachutists carry sub-machine guns or machine-pistols. They also carry hand grenades. Against automatic weapons and against hand grenades men with bayonets are useless. Clearly, these sentries, therefore, will have to fire their rifles. But the British service rifle fires less accurately with the bayonet fixed than it does with the bayonet

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

removed. So we get the position that our sentries (in any case inadequately armed) are made to carry a rather ridiculous survival from past ages on the ends of their rifles, which reduces their efficiency against the actual enemies they may expect to meet.

An issue of *War Weekly*, dated 28th June, 1940—after two campaigns in which bayonets were found useless—gives a picture of an instructor “demonstrating the bayonet charge.” The journal comments: “The Germans have already shown their unwillingness to face the shining steel of British bayonet fighters.” They have. They have also shown that those who now try to use the bayonet can be wiped out by anyone with any modern weapon.

Yet on the newsreels you may see members of Britain's new citizens' army, the Local Defence Volunteers, practising bayonet fighting. Such films are presumably passed by the censorship, in which the War Office has full say. If I had my way such films would be banned as liable to cause alarm and despondency, training in bayonet fighting would be confined to one platoon in each battalion, and all the rest of the bayonets in the British Army would be solemnly melted down for steel, out of which we could make sub machine guns and hand grenades.

There is a tendency in Britain, in this summer of 1940, to think that our greatest need is the manufacture of weapons and ammunition, of tanks and planes. I know well how badly this equipment is needed. No sacrifice can be considered too great for the production of such gear. But I know also that increased production is not the first or the main thing needed by our fighting men. The first thing needed is the destruction of these bewhiskered myths;



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

the main thing needed is to replace them by a sane and serious view of war, of discipline and tactics, and morale

As the shortest possible summary of our argument on the nature of war and its changes on infiltration and the need for initiative in modern tactics, we can say that

- 1 Modern war makes imposed, arbitrary and automatic discipline and rigid tactics not only useless but harmful, unsuccessful
- 2 Modern war makes voluntarily, understood and thinking discipline and elastic tactics based on initiative and independence, more valuable than ever before
- 3 In the British Army's training there is insistence on the discipline and tactics outlined in 1, and disregard for those outlined in 2.

The way to alter that is to inject a large dose of democracy. There is no other way. Democracy is, in its essence, the way of living, organising ourselves, training and, if necessary, fighting, that includes voluntary, understood and thinking discipline and methods of work based on elasticity, initiative and independence.

It is not the formal framework of democracy that is needed. An army cannot elect its officers or vote on what its tactics and strategy shall be. It is the raw stuff of democracy that is called for—men who feel free, and feel themselves by natural right the equals of their fellows, men who accept regulations and order—restrictions on their individual actions—because they realise the need for these in strengthening their collective actions, men who accept commands

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

as part of inescapable methods by which they themselves can achieve their own desires and aims—an army of free men

It has been a peculiar quality of most of the successful armies of the past that they have felt themselves to be relatively freer men than their opponents. Sometimes this was an illusion, but usually their feeling was based on a certain amount of reality. At a time when democracy is accused of inefficiency and a degenerate inability to defend itself, it is worth a couple of paragraphs to remind the reader of wars usually considered important by historians.

Tiny Greek armies, of citizens, defeated enormous Persian forces of slaves. Alexander the Great, with his "companion cavalry," rode over despotisms much more autocratic than his Greek influenced principality. The armies of the Republic of Rome were free men in form, and more nearly free men in fact than the Carthaginians they destroyed. The Germanic and Gothic tribes that overran the Roman Empire had a primitive democracy of their own. The English archers at Crécy and Agincourt were already, because of the looser feudal structure of England, becoming semi-independent yeomen, they beat the French serfs and knights who were still in every sense "their lord's men." Cromwell's army, which appointed its "agitators" and sent them to argue politics with the Lord General, was more democratic than that of King Charles. Washington's poorly trained national militia beat the Hessians of King George. The ragged armies of the French Revolution fought most of Europe with success, and Napoleon's great armies were made out of these men of the Revolution and

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

were fired by its principles—however much Napoleon himself departed from those principles.

The Great War is recognised now as a war that was not "for democracy." Because of this we are apt to forget there was, in fact, rather more democracy available in some countries than in others. The armies that collapsed were the Russian, the Turkish, the Austrian and the German—in that order. The countries with the least democracy collapsed first; the order is also the order and degree of autocracy.

There are, of course, exceptions to this rule; there are exceptions to every generalisation that can be made about human history. In spite of Frederick the Great and General Franco, we can reckon that throughout two thousand years of warfare the majority of successful armies have been created by communities relatively freer and more democratic than their opponents. The odds, to judge from "form" of the past, are about three to one in favour of a democracy (relative, limited, qualified, even monarchical) beating an autocracy.

This is "wet paint!" The idea is a new one, or will be new to most people. It is commonly believed to-day that the totalitarian state is necessarily stronger for warfare than the democratic one. And it will be argued against this view that the Germans have achieved an army capable of fighting a modern war by methods very different from those of democracy. That is true, and this I am convinced is the weakness of the German Army. It consists of a thin crust of picked men, admirably trained, who possess initiative and dash because they have been taught that they are the masters of Europe and the world, the knights of to-day. But behind this thin crust, behind these armoured finger-nails, the German Army consists

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

largely of over-drilled men doing things automatically, according to the book, incapable of initiative and indeed of any form of fighting except that of the herded mass attack

Totalitarian methods produce an army fit for war. Our own methods of the past have not produced such an army. But we can find ways to make such an army, which not merely retain democracy but use its vital force to make something far better than the Nazis can ever produce. We do not need to model ourselves on and copy the Germans, however much we may need to reach their level in tactics, Cromwell's New Model Army is still the best model for British fighting men

The essence of democratic discipline is that it is the self-discipline of men who agree. It can be very severe, it can be the very opposite of anarchy. But it cannot exist without a feeling of freedom to discuss, freedom to take responsibility, and a deep and shared understanding of aims held in common. To make such discipline we have to destroy two solidly based ideas

One of these ideas is that the young man entering the Army "must learn to be silent, not only when he is rightly blamed, but also, if necessary, to suffer injustice in silence."

The other idea is that "if doctrine is actually right in its general lines, it is less harmful to stick to one version of it, even if it should no longer quite conform to the reality, than—by improving it—to expose a principle . . . to general discussion with its most evil consequences . . . For how can you expect to fill people with blind faith in the rightness of a doctrine when by constantly altering its external structure you create uncertainty and doubt?"

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

These ideas are part of the "doctrine," the beliefs about life and war, held by many of those who in the past have ruled the British Army. I have quoted them from a foreign book because this book puts into outspoken language the cloudy faiths of Camberley and Aldershot.

The book is Herr Hitler's *Mein Kampf*.

These ideas are essential to Fascism: injustice endured in silence; doctrines maintained, when not fully realistic, because general discussion is evil; blind faith. They are not only out of place in the army of a democracy, they are out of place in any army that has to fight against an alert and modern opponent. They are harmful to that army's fighting power, because this power is necessarily built largely on independence, initiative, and intelligence. These qualities cannot be combined with the principles I have quoted.

The Germans have made a good army on the basis of blind faith and the acceptance of injustice. But is only good compared with the armies it has met so far, armies hampered by folly and the myths of the past. We can make that army look not so good.

A man who will accept injustice in silence will also, for the same reasons, accept orders that do not make sense to him; he will try to carry out these orders without understanding them. In the old days that did not matter much; to-day it is fatal. Neither elastic defence nor infiltration can be carried out well if orders are obeyed with blind faith and without understanding. And the German ways of handling these tactics are not perfect; they are wooden, and when strongly fought are over-cautious.

An injustice is an inefficiency. It is unpleasant to

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

be reminded that one can be inefficient; but the officer or N.C.O. who is unjust, and therefore inefficient, must have this pointed out to him

Because obedience is necessary, and obedience is impossible if every man protests at once against orders that he misunderstands or that are actually unjust, protest against injustice must normally be made "off parade" But a request for explanation of an order that "does not make sense," that a man cannot make part of himself and use all his wits and abilities to carry out, should always be made by the man himself, directly and at once And the officer must, if he can, explain If he can't, he must say "no time now, carry on," or must say "carry on you'll see the idea later" In no case must he tick a man off for failing to understand the order, or for querying it.

Explanation and command are opposites Like most opposites in this puzzling world, they intermix. Changes in weapons and consequent changes in war make it necessary that there should now be the maximum possible amount of explanation in the mixture.

It is the duty of the commander to put explanation in with his orders to the limits of his time and ability But it has been proved useful, in armies that have made their popular origins and attitudes part of their fighting power, to have alongside the commander of any but the smallest units a type of leader whose principle duty is to explain, to hear complaints, to remedy injustices and take some part in punishment. He relieves the commander of many administrative duties, of many concerns about morale and discipline He stands closer to the men, in every way, than is possible to the commander because of the latter's function, and in the experiences of these armies he has been

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

proved to be an invaluable link in the machinery of warfare.

In Oliver Cromwell's "New Model" army he was called the "agitator," because he whipped up the fervour of those godly and dangerous fighters. In armies of the French Revolution he was the "delegate." In the armies of the Soviet Republic he is called the "political commissar." In those of the Spanish Republic he was often called by the same name as in Russia, but his official title was *comisario de guerra* commissar of war.

The Adjutant-General's branch of the British Army (which some say is a direct descendant from Cromwell's "agitators") is responsible for the selection of officers, care of wounded, health, discipline, burial, welfare, routine and pay of the troops (F.S.R., Vol. I, page 45). I do not suggest that this branch should be encouraged immediately to appoint "political commissars" throughout the Army. But I believe that the rescue of the British Army from obsolescence can be effected most thoroughly and most rapidly if a Corps of Adjutants can be formed to modernise it from within, beginning usually with an attack on the barrack-square, parrot-rigmarole mentality that must be rooted out.

The Adjutant-General's branch has already made a step towards this proposal, which I first put forward in April, 1939, by appointing Welfare Officers and laying it down that men in the ranks may approach such officers directly with their complaints or their suggestions. (All other officers, according to ancient custom, can only be approached by a private if he gets an N.C.O. to accompany him.) But the Welfare Officer can fulfil only part of the job that I believe

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

necessary. Men must be persuaded, made to understand, given the enthusiasm that will change their discipline from an acceptance of orders to an eager use of all their powers in pursuit of a common aim. They must be made to feel that their own contribution has value and is accepted, that the war is their war. This can only be done on a political basis, a man whose main concern is welfare can remove grievances of the smaller sort, but he cannot do this political work without which a democratic discipline is impossible.

I repeat that in modern battle the corporals and sergeants leading little groups of infantry forward, the junior officers and men of the mechanised units, have to display initiative and independence, and have to rely on their own judgment. When a small group of tanks has broken through to a point fifty miles behind the main line of the enemy, when a sergeant has led his section to a point near the enemy's artillery, these units are cut off from command. The initiative they need can come either from very long training along rigid lines, or from the qualities and beliefs of the men themselves. We have not got time for a long period of Nazi training (even if we desired such a training which implies the destruction of all that we are fighting for). Our only way to produce an army capable of doing the job is to use the qualities of the men who form our democracy to the fullest possible extent, releasing them from the hampering myths and snobbery of the past.



## CHAPTER III

An important aspect of the Nazi blitzkrieg has been left out of the previous chapters, or only mentioned in passing. It is their use of tanks and planes. In this chapter we attempt to summarise the methods by which it is possible to meet German tanks and planes.

The question of air attack is very simple. To meet it you only have to keep your head, keep your morale. It is a weapon against morale. It does not in fact kill many men. The dive-bombers sound like all the archangels of Hell. They are literally the most terrifying things that exist on earth. And they kill very few people. There is only one thing to do about bombers. That is stay in a hole and pay attention to your business. Your business, usually, is not with them, but with men and machines on the ground. Always remember that Hitler is trying to make you afraid—or is perhaps succeeding in making you afraid—simply by making various sorts of loud noise. However afraid you may be, if you run you are in greater danger from the bombers than if you stay put. And if you put your face down and stop watching for the enemy tank or the enemy infantry, you are doing exactly what Hitler wants you to do. And you are doing what is dangerous for yourself, and for your side.

When aeroplanes come over, don't look at them. They see faces more easily than anything else. Keep looking where the tanks or the enemy's infantry may

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

appear. Then the bomber is less likely to spot you. Even if he does spot you, he is absolutely unable to hit you except by accident.

Troops who have not been accustomed to bombing attacks can be frightened, shaken, tired and worned by such attacks. But if they do not bunch, if they remain in trenches or fox-holes or under any sort of cover, they cannot be killed by such attack. There is therefore no need whatever for units to retreat before air attack alone. There is some need that the infantry should be given weapons by which it can hit back at the dive-bomber; to give men a feeling that they have at least a chance to get their own back on those who are attacking them is good for morale. But if they are given such weapons—the light machine gun and the Bofors gun are both useful—it must be well rubbed into them that these weapons must be directed first against ground targets, and only used against air attackers when no ground targets are available and time and ammunition is to spare. (The Bofors and other light anti-aircraft guns can, of course, be mounted in such a way as to make them quite useful anti-tank weapons, and the absurd specialisation of these weapons should be ended.)

The only other thing that needs saying about German air tactics is that they concentrate their bombers most heavily at the points where their armoured units are held up. Road blocks and strong points designed to stop the advance of mechanised units should therefore be prepared to expect attack against air attack. Travelling recently in Lapland I have seen too many cases where a road block has been prepared, but there is no trench, or dug-out, near the road block in which its defenders

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

can hide from the bombers and yet still do their job. Such positions should be made as far as possible proof against both forms of attack.

It is also quite unnecessary to put road blocks where they are extremely easy to see from the air. We have plenty of trees alongside our English roads, and cover from the enemy's view is an essential part in any defensive works.

While these seem to me the only points of importance with regard to German air tactics, I am doubtful whether the British Army has yet fully realised the need for certain simple rules by which it can protect itself against any form of air attack.

The first rule is that troops must act in the right way as soon as aircraft come over them. It is not necessary and usually it is not possible for orders to reach troops in the field in time. They should scatter, if moving in close formation, they should not scatter far or attempt to reach cover if that is more than twenty to fifty yards away, they should lie still, keeping their faces down. This procedure should become the normal one of the army, so that wherever men are, or whatever they are doing they immediately disappear into the landscape and make their unit a bad target as soon as a plane comes over. It will of course be necessary in some cases to order men to pay no attention to planes whatever, gunners must keep on working their batteries if need be, and men with particularly urgent work to do must not drop it. But these exceptions should be specially ordered, the rule should be to break ranks, scatter, lie down. And the reason for this rule should be carefully explained to men, so that they understand that faces and movement show up from the air. They

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

must understand also how much this business of air attack can hamper the movement of an army, and therefore how necessary it is for them to rally quickly as soon as the plane has gone by, or as soon as it is *recognised to be one of ours*

Under conditions of severe air pressure the transport of a modern army moves mainly at night. In fact most of the work of the army is done at night, and as little as possible is done in the day. But a commander should never hesitate to expose troops whose morale he can trust to air attack in daylight. Such attack may slow down the movements of his troops, but will not cause heavy casualties if they move in irregular and open formations, and keep still whenever possible while bombers are above them.

The tank is a much more serious weapon at the moment, than the aeroplane. I must admit that in things I have written before May, 1940, I predicted that tanks in this war would be almost as useless as they were in the Spanish War. But that was because I could not conceive that the Allied armies would completely neglect the lessons of the War in Spain.

To take only one example, the French 37 mm anti tank gun was tried out by the Republican forces in Spain. It was found to be just heavy enough to knock out most of the German and all the Italian tanks used in Spain. But clearly its shell was too light and its muzzle velocity insufficient for heavier tanks. Everyone knew that heavier tanks were being built. The French themselves were building tanks of seventy tons, with very heavy armour. Officers of the International Brigade who were members of the French Reserve of Officers went back to Paris and reported that the French anti tank gun was too light,

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

and that the Soviet gun throwing a shell twice as heavy was a far better weapon. I and others in Britain privately and publicly advocated a much larger gun. It remains, I think, rather doubtful whether the refusal to listen to us was due to stupidity and incompetence, or whether it was due to the fact that industry in France and Britain is organised so little for production and so much for profit that if the soldiers had wanted a change in the design and size of their anti-tank weapons, they could not have got such a change without long delay and very heavy costs.

The Germans on the other hand tried out in Spain their 88 mm gun which combines the work of an anti-aircraft and anti tank weapon with that of field artillery. Its shell is nine or ten times the weight of the French 37 mm shell, and the fact that it can be used for the three purposes named makes it possible for the Germans to have far more of such weapons per mile than was possessed by the French and British armies.

Early in the Spanish War we had no way of stopping enemy tanks. Then miners came from the coal pits and iron mines, sometimes carrying brown paper parcels of mining explosives under their arms. They strung themselves out across the fields near Madrid, crouching under olive trees or bushes, in roadside ditches or any hole in the ground. They waited for the tanks. And when these blind machines came nosing into a line of our "dynamiters," one of our men would throw a packet of explosive with a crackling fuse, dropping it between the tank and the ground. And there was no tank!

If the tank did not come near enough, the men on

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

each side of it would watch the direction in which the tank's guns were pointing. Bolting from cover, one of them would cut across to get close into the side of the tank, so that he could sling his "present" under the tracks. A tank's machine gun can seldom fire downwards sufficiently to catch a man who is crouching just beside its tracks. Sometimes these men blew themselves up on the way to the line, or as they were blowing up a tank. But they mastered the tanks.

In May, 1940, larger and more powerful German tanks smashed across Belgium and France, caught the British Army, the Belgian Army and many French divisions in a net of steel and flame. The French anti tank guns were too weak; the British too few. And the men who knew how to destroy German tanks, who had practised the job and were confident and proud of it—these men were Spanish refugees or International Brigaders, locked up in French concentration camps! Or they had been sent to Africa or Syria to make roads, their help refused, their souls embittered.

And in the French and British and Belgian armies there were few hand-grenades, there were none big enough to stop tanks, there were no men trained for this job.

These methods were not only used by the opponents of General Franco in Spain. Brigadier General P. R. C. Groves, D.S.O., visited General Franco's forces in 1937, and on November 7th in that year the *Observer* printed his account of an attack on General Franco's lines at Fuentes del Ebro, carried out by over eighty Russian made 14 ton tanks.

"While the men in the front line trenches held

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

their ground and beat off the advancing infantry, the supports and the reserves from the village closed on the tanks. They closed in with bombs, bottles of petrol, and rags soaked in the same liquid. Nine of the tanks were captured or destroyed by this means, and the remainder retired; the five disabled in no-man's-land were knocked out by anti-tank guns."

Brigadier-General Groves then described the Russian tanks, and their vulnerable points. He goes on:

"The armament of this 14-ton tank consists of a 4½-centimetre quick-firer and a machine-gun, both mounted in a cupola; both must fire in the same direction, and neither can be depressed sufficiently to reach a man close alongside and bent double. However rapidly the cupola may be turned, a simultaneous rush from all directions invariably ends in a number of men reaching the tank untouched; it is these who use the rags, blankets, petrol, and picks; bombs do the rest."

It is really amazing the British generals, even if they refused to learn from the "Reds"—who held up German tanks and planes for more than two years—should have also refused to learn from the Fascists! But it is no use digging up the past, except to make for ourselves entrenchments against a future danger.

I believe the following points about anti-tank grenades are correct. Fuses should be very rapid: two to two and a half seconds. In a second a tank may travel forty feet, and you cannot afford to have

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

your grenade burst behind the machine. The best place from which to throw the grenade is a position as close to the side of the tank as possible, let the machine go just past you and sling the grenade under the tank from behind it, dropping flat as you do so. Don't try to lob the grenade up into the air, as it will probably bounce off, or waste its punch on armour that can resist it. The tracks and cog wheels of a tank, and in some types the relatively unarmoured belly, are the machine's weakest points.

Where roads have to be guarded, grenades that will go off when a tank runs over them are very useful. They are much better than land mines, which have to be buried where German bombs may set them off. Even the largest grenade can be hidden by the man carrying it in the bottom of a ditch, or in some sort of hole, until the tank comes along. With these sort of grenades, it is useful to have a string across the road. The man on one side hauls on the string just as the tank is approaching. On the other side a man rolls the grenade out on to the road. A check string, which must not get tangled, prevents the grenade from going too far across to the other side. If you have grenades to spare, string several of them together to make a "necklace" over which the tank cannot pass without detonating at least one grenade.

Remember always that a tank's driver and gunner can only look out of little slits in the armour plate. If you stay hidden they cannot see you. If you jump out suddenly, the tank gunner has to turn his turret round to bring his guns to bear on you. The most dangerous distance away from a tank is two hundred yards, the safest distance is six inches. And remember that bullets bounce off armour. To



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

fire a rifle or machine gun at a moving tank only tells the crew where you are. If a tank is stopped, and you are a very good shot, you may be able to put a bullet into the little slits from which the driver and gunner look out. But it is not easy.

Men handling grenades against tanks should not have rifles. They should be supported by one or two men with rifles who take a position well away from them, and whose main idea is that they will distract the tank's attention and make it swing its guns towards them and away from the hidden "dynamiters."

There is no reason whatever why a great industrial nation such as ours should not make plenty of these grenades *in a week or two*. We in Spain had not always enough, so we used "petrol bombs." I do not recommend these, and I mention them only with a serious warning. At least ten per cent of those who try these nasty things are likely to burn themselves quite badly.

And the petrol bombs are not much use. They seldom can be relied on to stop a tank. If lobbed on to the top of a tank, in the way that is sometimes advised, they merely warm it slightly. If on the other hand they are thrown underneath it, the petrol just splashes out on to the road and the tank runs over it without injury. The only method that I know that has any chance of success includes a length of curtain or blanket wrapped round the petrol bottle, which should be so thrown as to get caught up in the tracks and bogies of the tank, I believe the only part of a tank that can normally be damaged by flame is the rubber of the bogie wheels on which the track runs.

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

These petrol bombs seem to have caught the imagination of soldiers and public alike. That is probably because they seem much easier to make than any form of hand grenade. And few Englishmen know much about explosives. Their enthusiasm for petrol bombs is due to their eagerness to get on with the job, using whatever materials are ready to hand. But we have great quantities of explosives in this country. It is not at all difficult for us to make really enormous quantities of large hand-grenades, each containing a pound or a pound and a half of explosives. These, in the hands of brave men, are far more efficient than either anti-tank guns, petrol bombs or tank traps.

In a later section of this book I mention some of the other methods by which tanks have been checked and can be checked again. But for trained soldiers I am convinced that the use of large hand grenades is considerably the best method. Anti tank guns, too, seldom seem to be available at the points where tanks break through. Anti tank mines are usually exploded by bombers, or the tanks avoid them. The hand grenade can, on the other hand, be far more widely distributed than any gun can ever be. It can be given to troops whose main work is transport or the making of roads, as well as to the men of the line. It does not have to be laid out on or just under the surface of the ground, like the anti tank mine. Under air bombardment the men responsible for anti tank work can hide their grenades in deep slip trenches or in dug outs. For these reasons the "grenadiers" are much more likely to get their tanks than are any other sort of troops.

We have to imbue anti tank troops with the idea

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

that tanks are something to be hunted. Tanks stick to roads whenever they can; they lay up at night in woods or villages. They are most vulnerable when at rest, but can be checked by any sort of obstacle and attacked when moving relatively slowly.

German mechanised units usually advance under cover of a screen of motor-cycle scouts. Such scouts cannot bring much fire-power to bear and are excellent targets, even when riding fast. But they can be checked and slowed down by any sort of extemporised obstacle. In a narrow village street, if a blanket is slung on a rope across the road from one window to another so that the approaching Nazis cannot see beyond the blanket, they are going to do very little rapid advancing until they have had time to cut the rope holding the blanket up—probably by means of hand-grenades lobbed into the windows on each side. Even so simple an obstacle as this therefore will probably cause them to check in such a way that they can be attacked with hand-grenades as well as with machine-gun fire if available.

Broken glass on the roads is bad for the tyres of motor-cycles and armoured cars. It is possible to hammer nails through boards so that their points project for an inch or two; these can be roped together and pushed out across the road from the ditch or from a doorway. The aim should be to make it impossible for the enemy motor-cyclists and lightly armoured cars to get ahead; then the Germans will have to bring up their tanks. If we stop their tanks in the ways that I have described, we have stopped the German army. For nowhere has that army shown itself able to make headway without its tanks preceding it.

## CHAPTER IV

How should we train the army? To those who know that a German invasion may occur before this booklet is published this may seem rather a foolish question. On the contrary, this possibility makes it an even more serious question than it would otherwise have been. For invasion does not mean the end of all things. It certainly does not necessarily mean the end of the war. But the possibility of invasion does mean that we may lose a number of troops and have to replace them quickly, we may have to raise a much larger army, training rapidly each age group as it is called up. Therefore the possibility of invasion makes necessary a great speeding up of training. It is here that we come against the question of drill. And I repeat here arguments that I first put forward when conscription was being discussed in this country but had not yet been instituted.

*Infantry Training* states that

“ Drill is the foundation of discipline and *esprit de corps* and forms part of the training of all infantry units. Its objects are

- “1. To compel the habit of obedience. During drill it becomes instinctive and automatic for the leader to impress his will on his subordinates and for them to carry out his intentions exactly.

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

- "ii. To stimulate, by combined and orderly movement, the man's pride in himself and his unit.
  - "iii. To enable bodies of troops to be formed up and moved, rapidly and without confusion.
  - "iv. To restore the morale of troops which have been disorganised."
- (page 31).

It will be seen that the objects of drill are almost all "spiritual": three of the four objects are concerned with obedience, command, pride and morale. There is only one object of drill that is material, physical: to ensure that men can be moved rapidly and without confusion. Certainly this much drill is necessary. Men of average intelligence need some three to six hours of drill in order to make it possible for them to move anywhere in sufficient order. In a short training schedule it is best to crowd all these hours into a single week, towards the middle of the schedule. Let them fall over their feet and their weapons for a week or two: then give them a bit of drill and they will see the need for it.

But to take perfectly good young men and give them weeks on end of barrack-square, knocks out of them not only any "instincts" for fighting they may have, but also their ability to think about all orders received and to use their own judgment. Independence, initiative and intelligence are all ground out of the recruit at the average training depot. *Infantry Training* lays down a suitable schedule for Regular Army depots: in 420 hours work it includes 94 hours of drill, 6 hours bayonet training, 6 hours of guards and sentries, and 95 hours of physical

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

training—almost half the recruit's first three months or more is spent in this way

Obsolete tactics due to obsolete drill have before now destroyed armies. The armies of Austria were defeated by Frederick the Great largely because they were "strategically fixed to the alignments on which they deployed. The drill book of the day was partly responsible for this absurdity" (*Studies in Napoleonic Strategy*, by Captain R. A. Hall)

The drill of the British Army, until recently, was that of the Crimean War. It suited the tactics of the Crimean War—the men did then in battle in those days exactly what they had been taught in drill.

Drill teaches movement of walking pace or quick step. In modern war men crawl or run, or lie down. Drill teaches movement in unison, with men shoulder close beside each other. In war men are in loneliness yards apart, moving separately more often than together, men need to learn how to move singly and keep in touch with their group.

Drill teaches straight lines and use of the smoothest available ground. In war all straight lines are suicidal (because of enfilade fire by hidden machine guns and observation from the air) and broken ground is sought because it gives cover.

Drill teaches men to stand up stiffly until ordered to do otherwise. In war men should lie down, automatically, or sit down, when any movement ends. Men standing about waiting for the next thing to happen can be seen from the air, or from observation posts, far more easily than those who lie down.

Drill teaches men to obey definite limited immediate orders. In war, at the crucial moments they will not get such orders. Such orders cannot reach

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

them in time They have to act and think for themselves

Here we reach the "spiritual" or disciplinary disadvantages of drill Those who argue for plenty of it (and I found them at the base of the International Brigades, Albacete, using almost the same arguments as at Aldershot, twenty-one years earlier), usually begin their thesis with an indisputable proposition that discipline means obedience to command It is not willingness to obey but the fact of obeying that counts And in war it may be necessary to exact obedience to orders that go against a soldier's utter weariness, his natural feeling that he is called on to do more than his share ('I'm always picked on') and the desire of his body and mind for continued existence Men half asleep must be made to go on moving, men half broken by noise and instinctive fear must be made to leave relative safety and risk heavy odds in counter attack War makes necessary strong nerves and strong will power in the commander and absolute obedience by the men commanded Agreed

Therefore you must train men to give conditioned, automatic, "instinctive" obedience to the word of command That is the case for drill

And the answer to this case is that conditioned, automatic, 'instinctive' obedience is impossible under conditions of actual warfare, if you are going to adopt the tactics that are most suitable for modern war You cannot have such obedience when there can be no minute by minute orders to obey

You can get absolute obedience without drill It can arise from enthusiasm from a consciousness of common aim, from the desire for efficiency and victory, from the mutual respect that links, in any army,

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

good officers to good men; these things drill stifles and overlays with a prudging reluctance to do a single thing beyond what is directly ordered

In order to keep these really valuable qualities alive, drill must be cut down in the training of all troops.

I for the open air physical exercise that drill gives I would substitute a certain amount of football, particularly the training of men in games of the type to which they are not accustomed. Most men know either Association or Rugby football, we should teach them Northern Union and American rules; the American game has more points of resemblance to war than any other that I know.

I would also greatly increase the amount of field work, particularly section and platoon training. A number of competitions based on Boy Scout games are useful because they teach men the use of cover, of shadow, and of their eyes. Special ways of digging are also useful. A good infantryman can dig himself in when flat on the ground, without showing his head or arms above a foot high piece of cover. This needs practice.

There are plenty of other ways, beside drill, to give men exercise. Because of their efficiency against tanks, water obstacles, such as rivers and canals, are of greater importance in modern war than they used to be. Why on earth are not all regular troops good swimmers, so that they can cross such obstacles without cumbrous boats or pontoons?

In recommending sports and swimming as better training than "at the halt on the left form platoon" (or that ungainly groping for bayonets that follows the order "Fix hipe!") I do not feel that I am out of touch with the British tradition, playing fields of



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

Eton and all that. In advocating the use of films for tactical training and military education in general I am certain that I am in line with all good modern educational theory. All films ever made that show warfare, ancient or modern, in a moderately realistic fashion, should be available free to troops in training. Even films that show some lack of realism can be used, if corrected by short lectures. Since I know no British or American films of equal military value, I must recommend the Russian films, *Chapalev*, *Men of Kronstadt*, and *Defence of Petrograd*. The worn copies of these circulating in the training camps of Spain taught more than days of ordinary instruction, there are probably others of equal value.

In suggesting alternatives to drill I have, in this chapter, confined myself to only one aspect of the problem—that which can be called the more practical or materialistic aspect. There is another aspect—the moral. It is the more important. The question is not so much one of replacing obsolete training by better training, as one of replacing the whole "drill" attitude of mind, the attitude towards command and initiative, surprise and orthodoxy, that governs the Army to-day.

In the final chapter of this book I shall deal with questions of courage and morale. Here let me say that I fully acknowledge the possibility that men can be made as it were automatically courageous by a long and careful process of drill. But we have not time for that, and we have a better method to hand. Men who understand what they are fighting for, men who are in fact fighting for a country that is theirs and for their freedoms and for those they love, will not be lacking in courage. All we have to do is to understand

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

their qualities and make them understand their tasks. Then, from the moral point of view, there will be no need for much drill.

Another positive proposal in the matter of training, as soon as men have had some grounding in the use of their own weapons, they should also learn a little about the use of weapons employed by other units and other arms. A modern battle is a closely woven web of various arms and various services. The training of the British Army has in the past been too departmentalised, the infantry knows too little about the capacity and problems of its artillery, of sappers and signallers, of planes and tanks. This training is useful from a double aspect, it helps the various arms to co-operate. It also helps them to know beforehand what the Germans can and will do to them. The British infantryman will not face only German infantry, he comes up against German planes and tanks, artillery and mortars. If he is attacking he must know how to destroy as efficiently as possible the enemy's supply services, the lines along which reports and commands travel, the framework of the enemy army. Therefore he should be taught something about these as they exist in our own army, and should at the same time be taught special methods and appliances the Germans are known to use.

Such a diversification of training will also hold the interest of the men being trained better than a course of training that only deals with the technique of the particular unit or weapons to which the men belong. And an interested man learns far faster than a man suffering from the natural and inevitable boredom of military life.

It would be good if this principle of integration of

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

arms and services could also be carried out in the organisation of our army as well as in its training. The German Army has carried further than any other the principle learnt in Spain that all arms and weapons must be as far as possible integrated within the smaller units of the army. The Germans have to some extent "artillerised" their infantry. They have provided the infantry with small, horse drawn, quick firing weapons which form part of each infantry regiment and are the responsibility of the regimental commander.

In Spain we found it necessary to attach a small unit of engineers, when we could get hold of them, to each infantry brigade. And in the same way we found that medium tanks were usually best handled if given to the infantry brigade commander, they were less efficiently handled when not closely linked up with the infantry.

This integration and co-operation between all arms is an essential development of the modern army. The tactics needed therefore are not simply those of self-dependence of infiltration and of defence by small self-contained units. They are also tactics of co-operation, the fire of each unit must cover the next unit. The machine guns must interweave their fire and they must protect not only their riflemen and other machine gun posts but also the hidden anti-tank guns mined with them. The phrase is clumsy, but the best way that I know to describe these tactics is to call them 'the tactics of co operative self-dependence'. Whatever name or label we give them, they are clearly essential to the training and organisation of an army for modern war.

I have only one more suggestion to make about the training of troops. And that is that far more time and care should be given to the training of men in the use of hand grenades of all sorts. I have already indicated my reasons for believing that these weapons are the best answer to the tank. But clearly men who are to use them effectively must practice continually if they are to get their grenades at the right moment under moving vehicles.

I should not like to say that it is easy to hold a defensive position simply with men and hand grenades. But I do know that men in deep narrow trenches with concrete shelters or deep dug-outs where they can hide under heavy bombardment and pill boxes for their sentries can stand up to any amount of hammering and still keep their position. Then if the enemy attack in armoured vehicles they can use their large hand grenades, against enemy infantry attacking they can use the small ones. And if you have plenty of men and plenty of grenades you can be extremely hard to shift. The reason why you cannot rely only on such a defence is that there is bound to be some weakness in your line, the enemy will force his way in at some point where the defence cracks under pressure—and he must at once be thrown out again by counter attack. For counter-attack you need weapons that will hit at a greater distance than a hand grenade can be thrown. But for purely passive defence men with grenades and machine guns can put up a very good show. Therefore we should give far more time to training men in throwing this missile at towed targets and at stationary targets until they can drop a practice grenade exactly where they want to and when they want to. It will be very much more

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

than instruction as to how to "BIFF THE BOCHIE IN THE BELLY WITH THE BAYONET."

In all our training of soldiers, we must encourage to use their heads by allowing them plenty of alternative courses of action, among which they must choose

When war was relatively simple and many soldiers were very simple indeed, it may have been necessary that the orders given to these soldiers should be entirely plain and straightforward. The rule grew up that in British "operation orders"—orders for definite movements on the field of battle, that reach not only battalion and company commanders but also in some cases sergeants and corporals—no alternative courses, to meet variable contingencies, could be admitted.

A farmer, speaking to farm labourers, can give the order "if it is fine, we will harvest to-morrow, if not, we won't." But a captain speaking to his company cannot say "if the enemy's barbed wire is found to be fairly well destroyed, by the patrols we are sending out, we shall attack; if not, we won't."

Such alternatives are normal in all ordinary lives. A child has to cross the road to get to school. You tell it "if the traffic lights are green towards the traffic red towards you—wait. When the traffic lights change, cross over—but look out for cars turning across your path."

Alternative courses dependent on things that may or may not happen, can be understood by farm labourers and by children. Clearly they can be understood by soldiers.

The reason why soldiers are not supposed to get orders with "ifs" in them is not that they cannot

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

understand such orders. It is that they have to use their own judgment and initiative in deciding which alternative to choose.

Since they must now be trained to use initiative, we should drop these rules that stand in the way of such training.

And in our actual operation orders, when fighting, we must also trust the men on the spot to do the best they can with the general directions given them.

## CHAPTER V

Up to the present we have been dealing only with the ways in which our army can prepare itself to meet the *Blitzkrieg*. Now we turn to the question of a People's War.

Let us define what we mean by this at once. It does not mean the indiscriminate arming of everyone. It means that the efforts of our army for the defence of this country should be supplemented by some training and some arming of about four million men, who continue to live as civilians and to work at their jobs until invasion occurs or until they are needed.

Among these four million there would almost certainly be over half a million ex-service men. There are ex-servicemen between the ages of forty and fifty-five who are entirely capable of taking part in local defence. And these men can help in the training of the others.

The Local Defence Volunteers are the beginnings of such a force. They have been given too little to do, and often the wrong things to do; their organisation and leadership is not yet that of a People's Army. But the force is growing and developing; it can grow until the real eagerness of our people to defend their homes finds full expression within it.

Those who oppose the idea of a People's War argue that men are helpless against the machines of modern warfare. They argue that an amateur army is useless, would lead to confusion and would even hamper

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

those days there have been many other examples, including the two years' defence of Madrid

A battalion that I commanded helped to hold the last road into Madrid. It consisted of men and boys no different from you who read these lines. Many of them had received only ten days' training. None of them had more than six weeks. They had a few machine guns, all of them over twenty years old. But these 500 men held up 2,000 of Franco's infantry, commanded by Reichswehr officers and backed by German guns and German planes. Our battalion was scattered by German tanks. It reformed when the tanks had gone and took back the lost ground. That also is the spirit of the People's War.

And I know from that experience that this invincible spirit can be roused and set free in the people of this country. But only if we are as revolutionary as William Pitt, and the men who dared to make him Prime Minister when he was only twenty-four years old. Only if we are as revolutionary as Sir John Moore, and dare explain fully to our soldiers and our citizens the task that lies ahead of them. You do not make a People's War by ordering people to do things. You do it by convincing, arousing, letting loose their strength.

At the moment when this is written a People's War is being waged in China. The Chinese forces include a regular army, which is much weaker in fire-power than the Japanese invaders. But they also include guerrilla forces that work behind the Japanese lines, and carry on so continual a pressure that the Japanese are never safe away from the cities that they hold and the railways that they patrol in force.

Finally those who oppose the idea of a People's War



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

as "amateur" and "inefficient" should study Ludendorff's book *The Nation at War*. Ludendorff was a well-trained Prussian officer, intensely professional, and not in the least an amateur. He advocates that when Germany is faced with a war on two fronts, the German Army should be fully concentrated on one of these fronts and that a People's War should be waged by an armed population on the other. And he writes

"A 'People's War,' blazing up all over the country, will eventually prevent the victor from reaping the full fruits of his victory"

Since history and the opinions of great generals like Sir John Moore and Ludendorff are against them, the opponents of the idea of a People's War have to fall back on some very strange arguments. They say that we are demanding "a Tommy-gun for every village idiot"

Do they think that the people of Britain consist mainly or largely of village idiots? We have rather a different idea about the characteristics of the British people

They argue that "much nonsense is talked about the lesson of Spain—the true lesson of Spain is that the better equipped, better organised side won". It is possible that these journalists know more about Spain than I do. I only fought there.

I, as a soldier, say that we proved in Spain that a People's Army can hold up Fascism year after year. And we lost because Hitler and Mussolini had then—and have now—friends in Britain, powerful enough to prevent us getting arms and food. We lost, too,

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

because the friends of Fascism here were not fought and rooted out by those who professed to be against them.

A final point: defence needs training and full equipment. We agree with our journalist friends on this. It does. But if we have not time for full training, if we have not made the arms yet, what shall we do? Sit down? Surrender? Not while these islands have men, metal and explosives.

The plea for defence by fully-trained troops is a plea—almost—for surrender. For we have not got nearly as many fully trained troops as France had. In France those who feared the French people had their way. Their way led to capitulation.

Those who ruled France during the first year of this war were afraid of their own people. They were afraid to tell them the truth. They lulled them with stories of impregnable fortifications, they told them that the French army was nearly five million strong. In fact the French Army was scarcely half that strength. They suppressed all criticism in the press and jailed those who might ask awkward questions. If we fall to that level here we shall get the same results, if on the other hand we make the change necessary towards a people armed, alert, and angry, we can hold up Fascism no less efficiently than the Spaniards or the Chinese. And since we have immensely more industrial power, and resources that cannot be compared with the Spanish resources, or the Chinese, after holding up the Fascists we shall soon be in a position to take the initiative and crumple them up.

There are those who say that the idea of arming the people is a revolutionary idea. It certainly is. And after what we have seen of the efficiency and patriotism

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

of those who ruled us until recently, most of us can find plenty of room in this country for some sort of revolution, for a change that will sweep away the muck of the past. But arming the people is also completely part of the tradition of the British. It is in fact part of the British Constitution, and the *fyrd* of Anglo Saxon times, the militia or volunteers of later periods, have often been called 'the Constitutional Force,' because it is part of the fundamental law of this country that each able-bodied citizen can and should have arms and training for defence.

The tradition of an armed people in Scotland goes back beyond the days of Wallace and the Bruce, in Wales the wars by which the Kings of England were held up for more than a hundred years were waged not by a professional army separate from the ordinary people of the country, but by that people acting as an army. In England the tradition exists to this day in various forms. I remember as a child looking at a parish notice board outside a church and laughing at the strange name of one of the areas of local government to which a notice referred, it was called 'The Wapentake of Thoresby'. A Wapentake—I do not know if these areas have survived reforms in local government—was a country area in which the able-bodied men must bring each year their weapons to a central place so that the authorities might see that these weapons were kept in good condition and that the men handling them were fit to do so. It is a pity that these traditions of our past have been allowed to slide out of existence.

We can if we choose go even further back into the history of Britain and still find the tradition of a People's Army. King Arthur of the Round Table is

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

reported by Geoffrey of Monmouth, our first historian, to have called his people together when war threatened, and spoken as follows.

“ ‘Comrades,’ saith he, ‘alike in adversity and in prosperity, whose prowess I have made proof of in giving of counsel not less than in deeds or arms, now earnestly bethink ye all in common, and make wise provision as to what ye deem best for us to do . The more easily therefore shall we be able to withstand the attack of Lucius, if we shall first with one accord have applied us to weighing heedfully the means whereby we may best enfeeble the effect thereof’ ”

It is not a small or unimportant thing that we have far back in our traditions a leader—so far back that he is the king of the fairy tales and of the poets—who asks his fighting men for their advice and speaks to them as comrades

All this, some will say, is very well, but what of the practical side of the matter? How should these four million men be armed and how should they be trained?

Let us take the question of arms first. It is well known that there are not yet enough arms in Britain to equip fully all the men in the army, including those in training and those registered but not yet called up. So where are the arms to come from for a People's Army?

Rifles first. There are hundreds of thousands of rifles, of various sorts and sizes, to be bought in the American continent. Our army cannot use them—because they are of all sorts and sizes. Ammunition

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

would get mixed Buy them and let our citizens' army have them

The .22 rifle should not be despised It is more valuable than most pistols

But the weapon that every imaginative youth who wants to fight would like to have is the "Tommy-gun," the sort of sub machine gun used by gangsters and by G-men in the U.S.A. Why not appeal to those who make and possess these weapons in the U.S.A. ? *A few days after we had asked for these guns, and for American and Canadian sporting rifles—some of which are heavy enough to kill grizzlies—we should find the New York docks piled high with them* Half the farms in North America have weapons of some sort And the little sub-machine guns are made by the thousands

During the war in Spain, factories in Catalonia were able to make these simple sub machine guns Factories in Britain can certainly do so What the Catalans did was to take a captured German gun and copy it, what we should do (in normal times) is to spend many years discussing the design That is what we did with the Bren gun The Catalan system is better

Some years ago those who knew German arms pressed on the War Office the idea that some of our troops should be armed with "Tommy guns" A general is said to have answered "We do not intend to introduce the methods of the Chicago gangster into European warfare" Now someone else has introduced these methods, and very effective methods they are. Twelve thousand parachutists most of them carrying sub machine guns, dropped into Holland in the three days following May 9th That

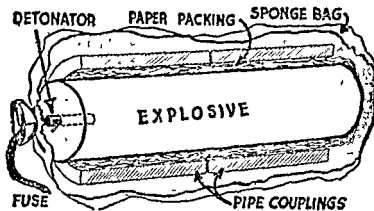
## NEW WAYS OF WAR

was the moment to wake up; and if we had woken up then, we might already have had in this country the whole available supply, new or second-hand, of such guns from North America. And within a few weeks we could be turning out several hundred a week in this country. If we mean to arm the people, it has got to be done.

Another important weapon is even easier to make. That is the hand grenade. Our men in France in 1914 and 1915 made hand grenades out of plum and-apple jam tins. They are not always perfectly safe, these home made hand-grenades. We are not advising anybody to start making them in the kitchen. It is quite considerably unwise for youngsters who know nothing about explosives to experiment with them. But there are in this country not only factories but even garages, pithead workshops, etc., which are quite capable of turning out effective hand grenades. They are so easy and so cheap to make that it is really a miracle of incompetence that this country has, at the time of writing, remarkably few available for those who must defend it. The small hand-grenade, about the size of an orange, is excellent against men. But we also need a much larger grenade against tanks.

I have already published, and I repeat below, the simplest possible design for a small home made hand grenade. I do so in order to prove to every one that these grenades can, in fact, be made in every town in the country. And that the materials of which they are made are available everywhere.

It is not the best grenade in the world. But it can do the job. It is not a tank stopper. To make a tank stopper you take the same design and make it



**HOME-MADE GRENADE**

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

With the ordinary "Bickford" fuse it is a good tip to attach the heads of two matches to the fuse at the point where you want to light it.

Wrap the whole thing in a piece of waterproof cloth, to be tied at the neck near the fuse. An ordinary sponge bag would do. And that completes a grenade which anyone accustomed to explosives can make, and any brave man with a little training can use.

With our enormous manufacturing resources we can make far better grenades than these. And they can be made in factories and workshops that at present are doing nothing towards the production of war materials. They will be handier than this home-made design; probably it will not be necessary to light them; they will have a pin to be pulled out and a handle to release, as has the Mills bomb. But it cannot be too strongly emphasised that we need and can have grenades by the hundred million. We need not only production on a great scale but also production in many centres, so that if bombing or invasion puts out of action a factory here and a power line there, there is no hold-up in the supply of these handy little weapons.

It is perfectly true that if these things are made by the million and widely distributed, there will be accidents. There may even be some cases of murder, and probably more cases of criminal negligence. But the life of this country is at stake; the number of accidents will not be comparable with the accidents we have every year on our roads. Moving about the country in motor-cars, etc., we kill some hundreds of people, preparing to defend ourselves we might kill some dozens. That would be regrettable. But so is



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

war. And we should not tie our hands when threatened by Fascism, because of bye-laws about explosives and the other necessary regulations of peace.

A government of a country that has been long accustomed to peace is naturally reluctant to put explosives and lethal weapons in the hands of its citizens. A government that represents propertied classes is always terrified by the fear of revolution. If we are to have a People's Army we must break down this reluctance and this fear, and find for ourselves a government that will entrust to the people the means for their defence

One final word about weapons. Some "parashots" are carrying twelve-bore guns. These are not good enough for the job. But if they have to be used, the following can be done: take each cartridge and remove the cardboard end, shake out the small pellets of shot. If you can get hold of more powder, remove the wad that separates the powder from the shot and add enough extra powder to fill half the space where the shot used to be. Take the pellets, which will seldom stop a man at twenty yards, and melt them down to make large slugs. These should be about the size of your little finger. Pack three of these into the open end of the cartridge, and you have something that will stop a man at fifty yards or more.

Another way of doing the same thing is to pour candle-grease into the shot, the candle grease will solidify and make a single "bullet" out of the shot which will be dangerous to an enemy at considerably greater range than the shot normally would be. But because shot-gun barrels are "choked" the candle-

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

preme "bullet" must be made a little smaller than the inside of the cartridge

Still a third way is to slice the cartridge with a sharp knife round the middle of the cardboard tube, so that the part containing the lead pellets is almost separate from the part containing the powder. When such a cartridge is fired the whole end of it goes off as a single bullet.

Some rather absurd things are being done about shotguns at the moment when this is written. In some country areas they have been collected from the farmers and country people for the L.D.V. Then they have been taken to the nearest market town and locked up in the police station or some other centre. Frankly, this looks more like disarming the people than arming them. It is the sort of thing that happens when the local gentry and the chief constable are far more afraid of ordinary Englishmen than they are of Germans. If parachutists landed outside many towns that I know they would find that their way had been cleared for them by the British authorities, who have disarmed the first people that could get at them. There are farmers, farmers' sons and other village people who have joined the L.D.V. and brought rifles as well as shotguns to the first parade. Then to their astonishment they are told that they may not keep these weapons at home or carry them with them in the fields. They may not even go rabbit shooting. It is a good thing that we know from past experience how immense is the stupidity of some of the English country gentry and of most bureaucrats. Otherwise it would be natural to believe that this disarming of the people is definitely treacherous.

The next thing to be considered after weapons is

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

training in the use of weapons That will be dealt with in the next chapter. But there are two points essential to our present defence that come partly under the military authorities, partly under civil authorities, partly under the L D V. or the People's Army of the future These two points are the mining of bridges and the placing of obstructions in open spaces so that enemy aeroplanes cannot land on them.

Bridges in Poland, in Belgium, and on the Meuse in France were not blown up England has many rivers, and it may be necessary to blow up the bridges over them, at an hour's notice, if the Germans land tanks from planes or ships At present many of these bridges are guarded by men whose job it is to see that parachutists do not blow them up But in few cases are there arrangements made and explosives ready to blow them up ourselves if we need to do so If I were in charge of an area of the country I should go to some mineowner and ask him to lend me enough explosive to wreck the bridges in my area, and enough men to bore the holes necessary, and to fire the shots if need be There might be accidents? Yes But better several accidents than a failure to blow up bridges in front of a German armoured column

It is not a question of the Local Defence Volunteers or civilian authorities taking over this business of blowing up bridges The destruction of a bridge is a military decision and must, wherever possible, be left to a military authority But the people who live and work near a bridge, the local L D V, and the local government body concerned, must help the military in two ways They must, when necessary, see to it that the bridge can be blown up And if invasion happens, and there are landings from the

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

air at unexpected places and bombings that cut communications, someone really near the bridge—not miles away at the end of a telephone wire—must take responsibility if military orders do not come through. It is a very serious thing if bridges are blown up too soon, troops and transport may be cut off on the wrong side of the bridge and may therefore fall into the enemy's hands. But it is a much more serious thing for a bridge not to be blown up at all, and this has happened so often when the Nazis are moving unexpectedly fast in their *blitzkrieg* way, that we ought to take this matter seriously at once and be ready to make our rivers strong lines of defence against enemy tanks.

Our islands are very well provided with rivers. The Germans have a few amphibian tanks which can swim a river or a canal, but these few machines are relatively lightly armoured and not of great value in battle. All the rest of their vehicles can be checked by rivers and canals. But there are many roads in this country, and therefore many bridges. At the moment when I write the rivers that are our best lines of defence could in most cases be crossed by any German mechanised division without any delay whatever. By preparing these bridges for destruction and acting resolutely at the right moment, we could force them to delay for some hours at each of these little rivers, if not for longer periods of time. Where they find the bridge blown up, they have to bring up infantry who swim over or paddle over in rubber boats, secure a wide foothold on the other side and protect their engineers, who make a bridge of boats or pontoons across the stream.

A point of equal importance is the obstruction of

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

landing places where troop-carrying planes can come down. Every place where an aeroplane can land is a way in for the invader. All who live in the country or can get into the country for an evening or a week-end, can help to block up these ways. Some authorities are slow to realise the danger. Near a town I know is a disused aerodrome. This is guarded by a few volunteers not very well armed. It ought to be made unuseable at once—unless the Air Ministry needs it. If it is needed, a heavy guard should be put on it.

And it is not only aerodromes, or mainly aerodromes, that must be made impossible for Nazi planes to land on. There are big fields giving a clear space of 250 to 300 yards. There are downs and grass-covered commons, cricket fields, golf courses.

Here are three methods of making them unuseable :

1. Trip wires, securely fastened down, can be strung across about 4 feet high. They can be higher ; they must be strong.
2. Where there are crops, take some stout poles like telegraph poles and bury them well down. They will not interfere much with reaping. Put them 50 feet apart. They should knock the wing off any aeroplane that tries to land.
3. Where possible, trench open spaces such as downs. Don't worry about the hilly bits, they are safe. Across the level bits, cut trenches with one wall straight up, about 3 feet deep, and the other wall sloping. These trenches should be at least 10 feet wide to catch the wheels of a fast-moving plane.

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

There is more to do, and many willing hands to do it. It might be as well to make it difficult for Nazi seaplanes to land in some parts of our rivers and on the Norfolk Broads

Cars that are not needed for defence units, and are not in use, must be *really* immobilised, in such a way that a competent mechanic cannot make them workable. Otherwise the Germans will be presented with all the transport they need if they capture a few towns

In Poland and in France, German tanks drove up to civilian petrol stations and took their petrol from the pumps. All the stations should be guarded at once. The guards should be instructed when and how to burn the petrol. Where it is difficult to set petrol alight, because of danger to surrounding buildings, it may in some cases be enough to have means ready available for destroying the petrol pumps. In other cases it should be possible to make the petrol temporarily useless by dumping sugar, linseed oil, or some similar substance into the storage tank. Water will not do.

In some towns it would be wise to close down the petrol pumps within the town, as an elementary A R P precaution, as well as a precaution against tank raids. Supplies for these towns could be made available at roadside petrol stations in relatively open country.

But if to day we appointed volunteers, or half-trained soldiers, or even trained men who had not been in the front line in France, to guard such petrol stations, the first thing they would ask is "What do these tanks look like?" It is urgently necessary that silhouettes, photographs and drawings of all German

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

and British types of tanks, armoured cars and army transport vehicles should be circulated to our soldiers, and throughout the civilian population. Then you can be sure that you do not blow up a British tank or wait smilingly while a German vehicle approaches waving a Union Jack as camouflage.

In these ways many of us can do much to make Britain impregnable even before we get arms and learn how to use them.

## CHAPTER VI

THIS is a first lesson in modern warfare. It concerns all of you, whoever you are, that live in Britain. Whether you work on the land or in a factory, in a city office or near the sea coast, you may turn round any morning now and find that the war is within ten miles, or a mile, or a hundred yards of you. A study of the suggestions which follow will not transform you into a mature soldier. But it will enable you to be useful instead of passive in the fight to repel the invader.

First you should learn how to take cover

Then learn how to use weapons

Then learn how to move with as much use of cover as possible, then learn how, and what, to dig

After that, learn the ways in which you can stop tanks

Then learn the probable tricks and tactics that the enemy will use against you

I know that you can learn these things within a few days or weeks because I have myself played a considerable part in teaching these things to five hundred Englishmen, Scotch, Welsh and Irish, who within six weeks of the first hundred being grouped together, became one of the best battalions of the International Brigade in Spain. The first hundred got six weeks training, but drafts were coming in until the last week of all, and a few of those who moved up the line with us had only ten days' training. Yet in that line the



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

battalion endured over fifty per cent. in casualties—one man killed and wounded out of each two men who went into action. And after this hammering they were only 800-900 yards back from the line where they had started. They had lost almost all their twenty-year-old semi-derelict machine-guns; they had been scattered by tanks and reformed; but they were still in position as a fighting unit, covering the last road into Madrid, despite the continued pressure of an enemy four times greater in man-power and twenty times greater in fire power.

Because that was done by men no different from yourselves, by men who taught themselves and became soldiers through their desperate eagerness to save the world from Fascism, I know it can be done by you, since that eagerness now is in you and you also are defending your homes and your future.

The first thing needed is space on which to practice. Forget the trespassers' boards, and the rules that say that the parks must be locked, or that you may not go on the grass. But don't practice only in the open country; take also some side streets, or back gardens that your neighbours will willingly let you trample through if you explain what you are doing. Practice what you can in the yard of the factory, in the playground of an empty school, anywhere you can find the space.

If there is no cover in the only place where you can train for war, make some cover.' Put a blanket on a couple of sticks to represent a bush, dig a little hole and throw up a foot of earth to one side of it; drag out old packing cases; arrange two bicycles together and cover them with waterproof. Sort yourselves out. As a first rough approach to organisation make ten

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

men a section, and thirty men a platoon. Practice sorting yourselves out so that you can fall in quickly—the section in three ranks of three with the section leader in front of it, and three of these together to make a platoon. Then start on the business of working from one end to another of an area, first in threes, then in sections, then in platoons, in such a way that men are not closely bunched together, yet each man uses to the maximum possible whatever cover is available.

I put this point of cover first because raw troops, eager to fight, always expose themselves too much, get killed too quickly, either by neglect of cover or by bunching together too closely.

There are many games and competitions which the Boy Scouts know that teach the use of cover. Ask your local scouts. Don't be ashamed to learn from some cocky kid. If it was only your life that was in question, you might not like a fourteen-year-old teaching you how to keep your head down, when to crawl and when to rush. But this is not your personal life only; it is everyone else's that you know and the millions that you don't know; it is defeat or victory.

The next thing is the use of weapons. There are only three sorts of weapons that you are likely to be given at first. One is a rifle or shot-gun, one is a pistol, one is some sort of hand-grenade.

There are plenty of trained soldiers to handle all the Tommy-guns, machine-guns, artillery and other weapons at present available. So consider first these three.

To use any of these weapons in the right way, you must be able to gauge the distance between yourself and the target. Space a few men out at varying distances away from a group of other men. Number

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

the men spaced out. Tell Number One to signal with hand. Get your group of men to write down their estimate of how far away that man is from the group. Do this for short distances, as well as for long ones. Then when you have actually paced out these distances, choose those men who are the best natural judges of distance. Start them in on the instruction of small groups of others. Make use of all sorts of slopes and gradients to exercise their judgment. If it's practicable, get some ex-Service man to teach you how to judge distance by the apparent size of an ordinary window, by the relation between the breadth of your thumb nail, held out at arm's length, and a two-story or three-story house. In the local pub, instead of playing darts, make the boys guess the distance to any feature that can be seen from the door or the window. When it comes to hand-grenade work, teach your men what is the width of a wide street, and a narrow one; the most important distances for hand-grenade work are those from twelve yards to twenty five yards. Distances look very different if you are lying down, or if you're in a hole with your eyes on the level of the ground, and that's the next thing to get your men to realise.

Get them to make certain of the distances between lamp posts, the telegraph poles, etc., in any area that they are likely to be defending. Then you can judge distances along a road by counting how many telegraph poles are between you and the target.

Aiming comes next on the list. You must teach yourself how to press the trigger of a rifle without jerking or shaking the barrel, and while keeping your aim completely firm and steady. You can get on with this job with the help of any weapon whatsoever that

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

possessed sights and a trigger Don't bother to do aiming practice standing up, without cover That sort of method of firing went out years ago Practice lying flat on the ground, kneel or crouch behind sandbags or a wall—or even aim standing behind a wall and let your elbows rest on top of it

The following is a convenient form of practice Get or improvise a target of white paper and a small black bull's eye Put this on a stick near the ground so that it remains steady Get one of your men to aim with the rifle (which *must* be empty of any cartridge or charge in the breech of the magazine) Get another man to lie down and look through a hole in the centre of the bull's eye Tell him to repeat the usual firing orders "Fire," "Re load," etc It's his job to see that the foresight and backsight of the weapon are correctly in line with his own eye (and therefore with the bull's eye of the target) while the other man keeps his aim and fires There are two main rules for good aiming breathe gently and naturally while taking your aim, and squeeze the trigger very slowly and firmly

This practice is likely to be infinitely more valuable to you in the days ahead of us, than any amount of sloping arms and drilling

On pistols there are two essential things to remember Never assume that "it isn't loaded" It may be. And don't expect with any sort of pistol, unless you are a good shot already, to affect a man at twenty yards range Unless you are thoroughly used to a pistol, all you can do is wait with it round the door when you know that an enemy is likely to come through the door, or wait with it round the corner when you know he is likely to come round the corner Then fire at point blank range.

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

Men who have never used a rifle can, however, fire one fairly well as soon as they have learnt how to judge distances, how to aim correctly and how to press the trigger

All this can be done without ammunition. Our ammunition is precious. Do not waste it in practising too much at the rifle ranges—if you get any chance to practice there at all. In Spain few of our men had more than five rounds to practice with before they went into action. And if you know you are not a good shot but still you get hold of a rifle or shotgun somehow, hand it over to the next man you come across who knows the job.

The hand-grenade is a useful weapon for everyone. Great precision of aim is not required. Any man—and any woman—who can throw a brick, should be able to do valuable damage with a hand-grenade, especially if they can estimate distances up to twenty-five yards. Actually a brick is not a bad instrument to start practising with, if no grenade like objects are available.

The commonly used Mills bomb is shaped like a rather small orange and weighs 1-lb 10 ozs. It may be that the grenades we shall make in Britain will be of various weights, sizes and shapes. They may be cylindrical in shape, like a nine-inch length of gas piping, or they may look like a tin of canned fruit or beans. None will be lighter than one pound, the best weight to practice with is probably two pounds, there may be some "specials" for rolling under approaching tanks that will weigh four to six pounds. So practice with different weights. There is an art to master in the throwing of a grenade. It's no use trying to chuck it as if it were a cricket ball. You must

Frontal fire—useless

Cross fire—(Self)

A STRONG DEFENSIVE  
POSITION IS BUILT  
UP ON CROSS-FIRE

Frontal

Cross fire—(Self)

## PATROLS



### THE WRONG WAY

Patrols must always avoid skylines



THE RIGHT WAY

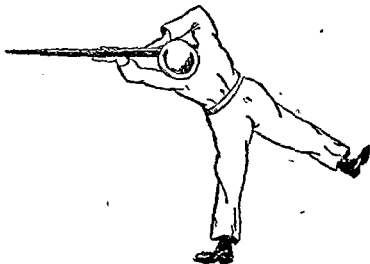
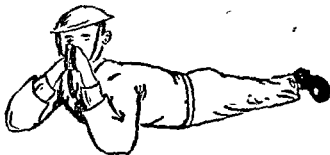
Men in position 2 have been covering men at 1; those in position 1 will then cover those at 2

Patrol withdrawn

HB

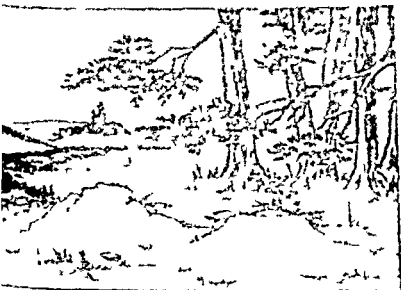


## HOW TO FIRE A RIFLE

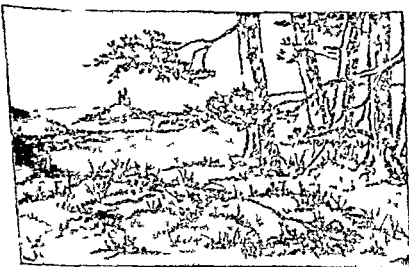


*Top: Position of elbows on the ground.*

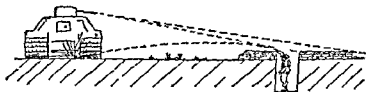
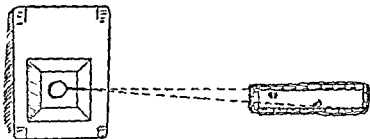
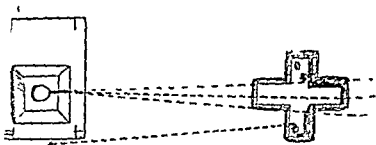
*Bottom: Position of body. Both feet should be spread at this angle with heels on the ground.*



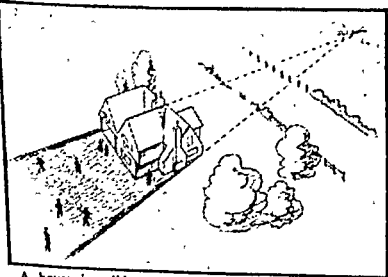
The wrong way to make protective cover



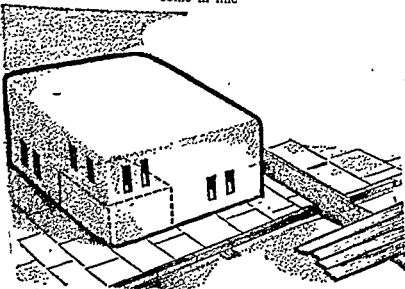
The right way



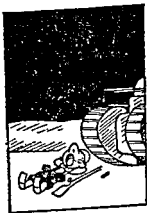
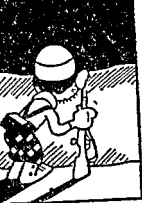
Anti tank trench made in shape of cross This gives protection from enfilade fire in the arms of the cross at right angles to the direction of approach of tank



A house is solid protection except where two windows come in line



Make your loop-holes at different levels so that your head cannot be seen against the loop-hole behind you



### ORDERS MEAN SOME- THING

The Spanish Republican Forces were taught discipline and the care of arms by means of a very popular comic strip describing the adventures of the bad soldier Canuto. In the pages reproduced above (1) Canuto has been on sentry duty, (2) he goes to sleep, (3) the enemy approach in the dark, and (4) an enemy tank comes up while Canuto is snoring (5) the attack is beaten off but poor Canuto has been completely flattened



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

lob it well up into the air so as to get distance. You can do this either under-arm or over-arm, according to which comes easier to you. Under-arm is easier when standing up; over-arm when you are in a trench or a hole in the ground. Try first to get the grenade to drop on a line some yards away from you. When you've become accurate to within a foot or so, twice in every three throws, increase the distance until you discover what your maximum effective distance is with each weight of grenade. It's not important where the grenade rolls to after it has dropped, but the point where it drops is very important. When you've advanced so far that you feel you can deal with a moving target, space your men out in a line, and persuade some fearless friend to cycle past them towing a pram or a filled sack. Then let every man lob his "grenade" on to the target as it passes him.

Digging has several distinct uses in modern warfare. You should forthwith learn *how* to dig a hole for yourself when lying on your belly. How to make a valuable trench out of a useless straight ditch by cutting slots to cover one man in a wall of the ditch, or in both walls. How to make a "fox hole" for yourself, in which you can reduce your personal risks from enemy fire or bombing. If you have no spades, go round to the nearest block of houses and yell out, "Spades for the People's Army, please."

Put in as much practice as you can with a pick axe now. It's not as simple as it looks. But any pick and shovel navy will put you on the right lines. It's the best possible instrument for giving you depth in trenching. And, when the guns begin, only depth spells safety!

The next thing is how to stop tanks. I have already

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

given some ideas on this subject. If you can think of a better way, no one will stop you trying. But don't do silly things like trying to electrocute them by switching current on to the tram lines. Tram lines happen to be a very good "earth."

If you want to try anti-tank ditches, which cannot be guaranteed, but are sometimes useful, dig a trench with one wall vertical and six feet high, and the bottom slanted up gradually to make the other wall, so that from ground level to the foot of the vertical wall is about fifteen feet. If you possibly can, strengthen the vertical wall with cement, steel rails or railway sleepers. Otherwise the tank will just come up to the vertical wall, and grind away with its tracks, as if it were butting the wall, until it has brought down enough earth to give it something to tread on in order to climb up.

The sloping wall must, of course, be towards the direction from which tanks are likely to come. Earth dug out should be made into parapets behind which men can lie and wait for tanks with their hand-grenades.

Look around your area for railway embankments, canals, marshy places, rows of houses built closely together, and other natural obstacles. And always remember that the German bombers co-operate with their tanks. If the tanks are held up, the bombers try to destroy the obstacle that is holding them up. So where you plan a tank trap or a road block have a few holes as shelter from the bombs.

There is another way in which tanks can be stopped by brave men. Where the path that they will take comes close to thick cover or consists of a narrow village street, you can wait for them with crowbars,

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

lengths of tram-line or similar pieces of metal. This is a job that is best done from the open doorway of a house against a tank travelling fairly slowly and very close to the house. The metal bar must be thrown or rammed into the side of the tank so that it gets in amongst the gear wheels and bogie wheels of the track. If a tank is travelling fast the bar will probably be jerked out of your hand, and you will fail to get it in among the works. But if you can get it properly placed, the tank will be stopped, and will probably block the road for those following it. For smaller tanks a pick slung into the tracks from the side will sometimes do the job.

Besides tanks you have to deal with the German motor-cyclists. Here again I have given some practical suggestions. If you spill any of them off their machines, get on to them quickly. But your aim is not the man so much as the tommy-gun or pistol or whatever weapon he carries. Get it quick before an armoured car or tank comes up.

If some of the motor-cyclists stop down the road and there are no heavier vehicles in sight, you can stalk them with hand-grenades. Their weapons are likely to be inaccurate. No tommy-gun can possibly hit you at 500 yards; at 200 yards it will not hit you if you are quick; at 100 yards or less it will cut you in half with bullets within two seconds. Keep these qualities in mind when tackling parachutists or infantry armed with this weapon, as well as the motor-cyclist.

The next thing in German armoured divisions are armoured cars and light tanks. These usually only carry machine-guns, which are dangerous at half a mile or less, but cannot drill through a strong brick



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

wall, three feet of earth, or any sort of solid barricade. If they stay out of range of your hand-grenades, keep quiet and let them stay there. Do not try to use rifles against them, as it only tells them where you are. An occasional sniping shot from a man who is posted well away from your main position will keep them sitting inside their vehicles and afraid to lift the lid and have a good look at your position.

The medium and heavy tanks are armed with light artillery, and the Germans follow their tanks with lorries which carry mortars and field-guns. The light tank artillery can knock holes in a house, but it takes an awful long time to knock a house down. It can chip, but it cannot destroy, a solid barricade. The big mortar can much more easily smash a house or a barricade. But it has a shorter range than a rifle. The Germans bring it up the road as far as they dare, then they hop over the hedge with it, or plant it behind a tree and start lobbing their fat, slow moving shells out of it. Keep a good look-out for these mortars, and when you see one being put into position try to get some rifles to pick off the men serving it.

But if two of these big mortars get your range, it is likely that you may have to move to a flank or to a second position behind that which you are holding. Under bombing, machine gun fire, or the fire of light weapons, such as tanks carry, stay where you are. But against heavier artillery, including the big mortars, you have to judge sensibly whether too many people are going to get killed if you stay where you are, or whether you can stick it for another hour or two and still keep your fighting power.

My own rough rule in the matter is never even to

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

consider moving until I know that 20 per cent of the men with me have been killed or wounded. And don't consider the question really urgent till you have had double those casualties. Then get out; otherwise you are losing the chance of remaining a fighting unit that can do the same job over again a very short distance farther back or to the flank.

If you must get out, get out quickly. Send your best man back first to pick the place where the unit will rally, and to rally them there.

When the Germans are held up they not only bring up their bombers and the big stuff to hammer at the obstruction, they also try to go round it, outflank it, surround it and attack it from the rear, flow past it and leave it behind while they press on much farther. Look out for these tactics, deal with them as best you can, keep as much touch as you can with those to the right and left of you. But don't retreat because outflanked. Don't even retreat, at any rate in daylight, when you are surrounded. Keep on blocking that road or holding that village or bit of trench until it is dark enough for your leaders to meet and decide whether it is better to stay where they are or go stalking Germans, or go looking for some of your own people.

One of the best bits of practical training that any group of men can carry out is to make a detailed plan of the way in which they would defend the place they live or work in. After making the plan, why not go ahead and make the necessary defences?

Any village can be made into a fortress. But in Poland, Belgium and France hundreds of villages were rushed by the Germans before any defensive

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

measures were taken This must not happen here

One of our essential preparations for defence against invasion is a rapid survey of defensive possibilities of our villages And after that survey immediate action not only by the authorities, but by every citizen able to help The first defences for a village are road blocks The second are buildings roughly prepared and stocked for defence The third are trenches

Road blocks must be powerful enough to hold up motor-cyclists, armoured cars, and the lightest forms of tank It is very difficult to hold up medium and heavy tanks, though a solid barricade may delay these There is one great principle for any road block It is useless unless "covered" by weapons A couple of motor cyclists, if they are not fired at, can smash their way through a barricade by means of half a dozen hand grenades

The purpose of a road block, therefore, is to stop the enemy vehicle so that it is a good target for men who are going to defend the village If you have not got such men, or they have not got arms, it is very little use holding up your own traffic by means of a barricade Therefore one of the first things to do is to survey the villages and decide whether or not a garrison of troops in training or other forces can be definitely allotted to the defence of each village

Sentries guarding a road block from damage by our own traffic may need to stand up in the road near the barricade But it would be better to make the road blocks so substantial that traffic will avoid them for fear of receiving damage Then you can put sentries where they will be most effective at least fifty yards away and off the road Men with hand-

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

grenades can be nearer than that. But not on the road

The best form of road-block is made with concrete. Next best, use boards or wire netting or sandbags, piled up till they are four feet high, with plenty of earth packed in between the boards or wire. Each wall should be three feet thick. If possible, one of the parts of the road-block should have walls all round it, making a little square fort by the roadside. A couple of men can shelter there from enemy machine-gun fire, and even from the 4-pounder shells of enemy tanks. A road-block must face both ways. The enemy may break into the village behind you in the dark or on foot and you must be prepared to defend it from both directions.

Road-blocks leave part of the road open for our ordinary traffic to pass. This bit of road must be blocked if you are to hold up the enemy. Again, it is not enough to put a few strands of barbed wire across. A good thing to keep handy to block up this gap is an old derelict motor-car, filled to the roof with bricks and rubble. It can be pushed into position by a few men. But then it should be tipped over on its side. Otherwise, if the Germans get up to the barricade, despite the defenders' fire, they will simply push the old car out of the way again. To pull a heavily loaded car over is not easy. Put a stout rope from the chassis up over the roof and haul from the other side.

To make a house useful for defence knock loop-holes that command the ways of approach. If these can be hidden by creepers, or set in some corner of the house where they are not easy to see, so much the better. Have buckets of water handy and blankets

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

or curtains to cover the windows. These should be hung somewhat away from the windows, otherwise the blast from a shell or hand-grenade may drive the glass through them. Two good thick mattresses or a thick brick wall will stop a bullet. You must be able to get into the attic, and, if possible, on to the roof. Barricade heavily the ground floor windows, and have stout timber to help the door to stand up to a hand grenade. If possible, have some way for the defenders to leave the house. A "crawl trench" just deep enough for a man to crawl along is enough.

We have boasted "an Englishman's home is his castle." Let us plan and prepare to make it so.

## CHAPTER VII

WAR is not only a question of fighting; it is also a question of politics. In fact the classic definition of war, made by the greatest German military theorist, Clausewitz, is that war is a continuation of politics by other means. This last chapter therefore contains my view of the political questions involved in the defence of Britain against Fascist aggression.

Those who are only interested in the technical side of fighting can stop reading my book at this point. But those who want victory should read this chapter. I am not here putting forward political opinions based on my own desires and feelings, I am not putting forward the programme of any political party. I do not happen to belong to any political party. What I am trying to outline here is a simple and one-sided view of politics that derives directly from military needs, the needs of victory. My outline of what I believe is needed for the defence of Britain would be incomplete without it.

For success in war a country needs men, arms, food, brains, allies, and a fighting spirit. Let us look at what has happened about some of these things in the past few years.

We need men. For a generation this country has had between a million and three million unemployed. Our social system, our rules about property and our customs about profit have been preventing these men from working. They have been kept alive. But both

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

physically and morally these men have been damaged by unemployment, they have been made less fit for work and less fit for fighting than they would have been. Their children, many of whom are now of military age, have had too much to worry about and too little to eat. Unemployment is an absurdity: there are plenty of things that men need and plenty of things out of which men can make what they need. And unemployment is unnecessary, both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany have abolished it, and clearly it is only kept in existence here because we count profits as more important than the right to work.

During the first nine months of the present war we have had on the average over a million still unemployed. The figure as I write is probably about three quarters of a million. There are still miners unemployed, while other miners are worked for exhaustingly long hours—not because this is an efficient way of getting coal, but because it is a profitable way. Clearly it is a military need, vital to the defence of this country, to see to it that work should in future be done because, and in the way that, the country needs that work done, not because it will increase the income of owners or shareholders.

There is a second way in which men are wasted to day. All over the country men are willing to volunteer for working or fighting but are kept in their present occupations because they need a wage to live on and because volunteers are not wanted. They are kept building houses, offices and cinemas when they want to be building fortifications. Houses, offices and cinemas are profitable. Men are kept making steel into library book shelves and office furniture. The steel is needed for war, the steel workers' skill

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

is needed for war But furniture and book shelves are profitable

When the B E F had to retreat from Belgium and from France, it had to retreat not because of the power of the Fascists but because of the power of profits It lacked the necessary equipment because our rearmament programme had not been designed to get that equipment, it had been designed to be profitable to some groups of banks and some employers—our steel trusts and the other great interests that provided not only our industrial leadership when Mr Chamberlain governed us but our political leadership also

Let us mention two of the weapons that the B E F did not possess It had very few hand grenades, and none large enough to stop a tank Yet thousands of millions of pounds had been spent on rearmament Why were these grenades not made? Partly because of wrong military theories But partly also because they are not very profitable Any factory can make them, you do not have to be a very large and important firm in order to make hand grenades Because firms outside the "rings" can make them, there is no considerable profit to be made from them The price cannot be kept up by a sort of monopoly, a ring or price fixing agreement And therefore they have been neglected

Take another weapon The Germans as I have stated, have an all purpose 88 mm gun for anti aircraft work, anti tank work, and for use as field artillery We have no such gun, instead we have three different types one for each job To produce three guns is more profitable than to produce one It is also more costly, and you get fewer guns for the same amount of money and labour if you are working



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

on three different types than if you concentrate on one type which can be "mass produced" Because it is *more profitable we made the three types, and made too few of them to meet the German mass-produced fire-power*

Therefore I say that in our use of men and in our production of arms we are hampered by the social system that has as its basis the search for profits and the protection of private property in the means of production In other words we are hampered by capitalism And what we need, in order to be strong, is a planned use of men, machines, and factories, in other words what we need is socialism

Those reading these pages who are not socialists may object that I am putting forward ideas that divide the nation My answer is that these ideas only divide the nation if the opponents of socialism insist on continuing to oppose, even when it is clearly seen that capitalism has failed to use the men or produce the weapons—even when the House of Commons with a large Tory majority is forced by the obvious necessities of war to agree to government measures of war socialism more sweeping than the Labour Party had been advocating before war broke out The nation is only divided on these matters if those who believe in or represent the interests of private capitalism choose to divide it

And if they do so the people of this country will believe that they prefer a victory by Hitler to the sacrifice of their privileges

This issue may be brought home very sharply to all of us if the Germans succeed in establishing some sort of blockade of our islands, which reduces the amount of food that can be imported There is still good land

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

lying idle in Britain We have not yet won back from the thistles and the couch-grass some of the acres that were allowed to go out of cultivation during the past fifty years

These acres were allowed to go out of cultivation because of financial and economic interests ; because some of our rulers were interested in the export trade, and some of our exports depended on countries abroad finding in these islands a market for the food they produce

And interests of these sorts, with the interests of financiers and land owners and traders, still hamper the production of food in Great Britain The whole machinery set up by recent governments to deal with agriculture was originally machinery for limiting the output of British agriculture Naturally, that machinery has not worked well when turned over to the opposite purpose of increasing the output of British agriculture

If we can produce a single ton of potatoes more by doing so, we should abolish private property in land If on the other hand some lesser measures would produce more, let us take those measures But let us not pretend that those interests and those sections of our society who have steadily ruined the actual land of England, steadily betrayed it to the weeds and the vermin, are the best people to organise the production of the food we need

On men and arms and food, this conclusion is inescapable that since we need socialist measures for victory, these measures will best be carried out by socialists A man who really believes in a thing does it better than the man who regretfully and half-heartedly accepts it as necessary

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

The three other things that I have said are necessary for war are brains, allies and a fighting spirit. In the army, and I believe also in the production of war materials and of food, we are not using all our best brains. For class reasons, because of snobbishness or because of "pull," men who went to the right schools but learned remarkably little at them are given positions above men of ability who come from what used to be called the lower classes. There are immense untouched reserves of qualified people who are crying out for work, but can only get minor jobs or sometimes no job at all. In industry there are many shop stewards who could in fact run their factories far better than they are in fact run by the managing directors, too many of the latter have been appointed by banks not because these managers know the factory or industry but because the bank will then feel safer about an overdraft or an advance.

The question of allies and of the fighting spirit of our people seems to me mainly a question of our war aims. What are you in fact fighting for, reader? What is the aim that you share with almost all the people that you know? You are fighting or ready to fight for your homes, for those you hold dear, and for your right to have a say in your own country. But you know this is not enough. Your aim goes beyond this: you want a world in which this business of world war is not going to happen again.

There are two ways to peace that any sensible man can see. One is a world run by one man, or one group of men, or one nation. It will certainly be a peaceful world—for a time. But to get there, the victors in Europe will have to fight America and Asia.

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

It would need several world wars to get such a peace  
And it would not last

The whole history of mankind tells us that it would not last. All the great empires of past ages have been overthrown, peoples grow strong and determined to get their freedom. They fight for it.

The other way is by an agreement of free peoples. That is the way I believe we must choose. And I believe that we are in fact fighting as the front line troops of the freedom of all peoples—or soon shall be. Those who say that this war is a war between two great Empires, each fighting for the right to rule and exploit other peoples without the latter's consent, are speaking of a war that is past. They are, to be exact, speaking of Mr Chamberlain's war. Mr Chamberlain lost that war. It is over. We are now engaged on quite a different struggle, and it is time we woke up to that fact, and made it clear to the whole world. That we can do by a restatement of our war aims that embodies a policy giving hope to Europe and to our own people.

Our war aims should be stated as the freedom of all peoples—just like that. But to make them real, we must also state that the peoples we conquered in the past are set free. That means India and the Crown Colonies. It means a Constituent Assembly in India and a consultation with representatives of the colonies, and possibly with the U S A, as to the future of those colonies. Unless we state these freedoms that are in our power, we cannot without hypocrisy claim to be defending the freedoms of peoples conquered by Hitler and Mussolini in recent years.

We should therefore offer ourselves as allies and associates to all nations and peoples throughout the

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

world—whether now neutral or at war, whether conquered by our own forces in the past, or colonised by our peoples, or conquered more recently by the Fascist dictatorships—in their endeavours to secure their full rights and equalities as nations, their power to choose and change their rulers and their ways of life

And we should offer opportunity to build up with us and all free men a new order of the world that will ensure peace by a world-wide agreement of all peoples. We should direct this appeal in particular to the inheritors of Garibaldi and Mazzini, of Goethe and the great scientists of Germany

I believe that this restatement of our aims and policy should be accompanied by a restatement of home policy, including full acceptance of the idea of a People's War. The following four points seem to me to come under this heading:

1. **A CITIZEN'S ARMY** Four million men reinforcing our present army and armed with weapons not needed by that army, such as the rifles that can be bought in many parts of the world and the hand-grenades we can make in any garage or small workshop
2. **ARREST THE FIFTH COLUMN** Those who want to muzzle the press and surrender to Hitler must be arrested; those who are unable to use the forces of the people (red tape civil servants, the Pétain sort of generals) must be removed
3. **A NEW LEADERSHIP** Mr Chamberlain and those who helped to build up the strength of Fascism must go from the government; the

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

people must be organised in new ways through some sort of committees of public safety or councils of action so that they can give their share to the new leadership

- 4 THE HOME FRONT. To help those who are remaking our industry, producers must have a wider voice in administration; the methods of Whitehall must be abandoned or thoroughly revised. The government's powers must be handled by men not afraid to use them, and the morale of the nation must be raised by a progressive programme that embodies obvious needs, such as the ending of unemployment and the national use of the nation's resources

A policy on these lines would release the energy and confirm the courage and fighting spirit of the British people. There is no need for us to talk heroics on this subject. The British people are stubborn and courageous and have the will to fight. But Nazi methods of war are methods of terrorism. Their weapons and their tactics are directed towards breaking morale. We cannot possibly have too much stubbornness, too much courage and endurance and will to victory. We may need all of these qualities that we can summon up.

The tactics of the dive-bombers are tactics of the "war of nerves" carried to a new level. Their projectiles kill few people, but the horrifying noises that they make can shake anyone. If we remain as we are, with much of our eagerness to fight and work continually thwarted, with men and women soured by the feeling that they are not wanted, not consulted,

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

not given a chance, there will be cracks in our morale which will deepen when the full force of the German war machine is turned against us. But if we have a policy such as I have sketched, and that policy is made clear and alive in all of us, we shall armour our morale more strongly than the Germans can possibly armour their troops.

On this question of morale let me add also a few words to those men and women who may very soon be fighting, or be close to fighting, for the first time. The first taste of fire is disturbing to everybody. Your inside turns over. Your tongue feels dry. Things don't seem right somehow. Please take my word for it, everybody feels like that. Some of the old sweats and some of the lads with swank in them may pretend that they are not afraid. But everyone is afraid the first time, and most people all the time, in battle. This fear is nothing to worry about or be ashamed of. You are not a coward or useless because your breath comes quick and your left knee twitches. That is normal, it happens to V.C.'s and D.S.O.'s. So don't worry about it, and keep busy if you can. If you can't be busy and have just to wait, which often happens in war, watch your tongue and keep a grip on yourself, so that any specially loud noise, or the squeal of a wounded man, does not make you jump up and be silly. It is useful sometimes to have some trifling phrase in your mind that you keep on saying over to yourself while you are waiting, especially if you are a few yards away from the next men as you usually should be when in action. I remember saying to myself 'why die crying?' You can probably make some better phrase than that or you can turn your mind to someone you are fighting for.

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

Or, if you are a politician, think of Mr Chamberlain.  
Be angry instead of being afraid

A battle is always a muddle But you can keep your head as well as the unarmoured bowmen of Crécy, who destroyed the knights, hitherto invincible, who tried to ride over them Your weapon may be a tin can of explosive or a shot gun that will only hit at fifty yards Treasure it until you have a good chance to kill a German Even if you only get one, you have helped to beat Hitler

To teach people not to be afraid of being afraid is one of the most necessary and most neglected things in war Youngsters who feel as almost all soldiers feel during battle imagine that these feelings are abnormal, and become obsessed with the idea that they have a yellow streak in them If they can be reassured on this point they will do their job well, but they will do it still better if they are inspired by the feeling that they are fighting for something so great and so hopeful that it masters and lifts them up And in this country freedom, made real in new forms, is still as powerful and as heartening as it was in the days when Milton wrote that liberty

“hath enfranchis'd, enlarg'd and lifted up our  
apprehensions degrees above themselves .”

Finally, to shape and unify us all into a people that knows and feels not only what we are fighting but what we are living for, I end this book with the suggestion that an agreement of the whole nation should be put to the whole nation, should be put to meetings and parades of civilians and soldiers, to every organisation within the country and to every



## NEW WAYS OF WAR

household And I believe that it should be put to governments and peoples throughout the whole world for their assent or for their modification It should be put also to those opponents of Fascism who, with remarkable stupidity, we keep in concentration camps or shackled to their homes in Britain and the Empire, simply because *their birth or parentage makes them "enemy aliens"* Those refugees from the Fascism they have struggled against who would accept this agreement, and were vouched for by known opponents of Fascism should, I hold, be set free to work and fight with us, becoming our most trusted allies and finding for us new allies in the countries ruled by the dictatorships

The form of words that I give below is a draft that I shall be submitting to others for criticism and amendment while this book is being printed It may or may not find publication elsewhere, it may or may not be improved by the amendments my friends will make in it But as I see it now it is something at least equally important, for the winning of this war, as any of the things I have tried to hammer home in previous chapters

We need an army revitalised and reformed, we need support for that army from millions of citizens who can defend this country, so that *parts of the army are freed to take the initiative against Hitler's sprawling empire* We need a restatement of our war aims in terms of human freedom, and a restatement of our policy that will bring eagerness and enthusiasm to our own people and to free men everywhere And we need to clinch this determination of ours, so that we no longer feel shut off from our neighbours by uncertainty of their views or lack of clearness of our own

## NEW WAYS OF WAR

views ; we need the strength and release of comradeship. With that aim I put to you, and ask you to put to others, this :

### OUR AGREEMENT

We are going to fight Fascism, and its friends wherever we find them, until Fascism is destroyed throughout the earth.

We shall do this because Fascism organises oppression, delights in warfare, and lays waste homes and arts, sciences and the ordinary lives of men.

As soldiers, or as civilians who from now on count themselves soldiers, we shall give in the common disciplined effort all our initiative and abilities, including our ability to hang on as our soldiers hung on at Calais and Dunkirk. We will stick by whatever we find to do or are told to do, in spite of invasion, bombardment, wounds, hunger or whatever may be the price of victory. We will take all that comes courageously ; and we will not do anything that may endanger victory.

Knowing that science and the riches of the earth make possible an abundance of material things for all, and trusting our fellows and ourselves to achieve that abundance after we have won, we are willing to throw everything we now possess into the common lot, to win this fight. We will allow no personal considerations of rights, privileges, property, income, family or friendship to stand in our way or hamper us.

Finally we take this oath : that whatever the future may hold we will continue our war for liberty by every means, open or secret, that we can use ; we shall go on, stubbornly and doggedly, until we have

# Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Granthagar

BOOK-CARD

16735

Call No: 940.54/MII/ Title

~~xxx~~ New ways of War.

Author Tom. Wintringham.

Date of issue	Borrower's No.	Date of issue	Borrower's No.
------------------	-------------------	------------------	-------------------

2 JUN 1969

261